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# M A D R I D

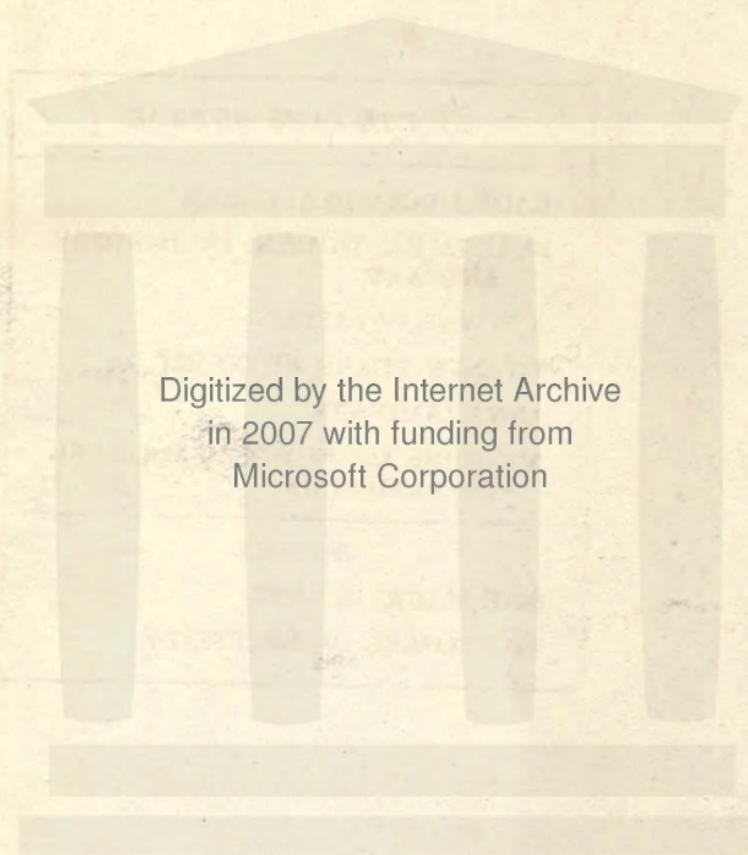
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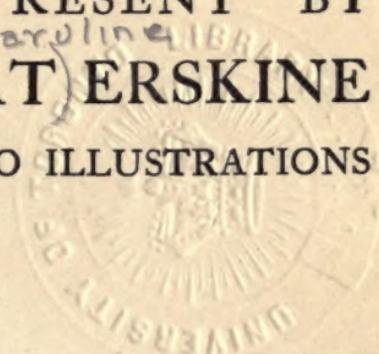


THE HOLY EUCHARIST. CLAUDIO COELLO

15p  
E736m

# M A D R I D

PAST AND PRESENT BY  
Mrs. STEUARTERSKINE  
WITH TWENTY-TWO ILLUSTRATIONS



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JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED  
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# WADRID



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TO

ÁLVARO DE ALCALÁ GALIANO  
MARQUÉS DE CASTEL BRAVO

ADMIRABLE WRITER AND TRUE FRIEND



## P R E F A C E

**T**HERE are three magnets that attract the art-loving public to Madrid : the Prado Museum, the Armoury and the Escorial. Having devoted a few days to the inspection of these wonders, the majority pass on to the show places of Spain, about which so much has been written. The object of this book is to give some account of the attractions of the capital and of some of the places of interest that are not mentioned in guide-books. It was intended to be written from an absolutely impersonal point of view, but the number of interesting people that it was my good fortune to meet causes me to alter, or rather modify, my original plan. Such as it is, the book contains notes on the life, the art and the amusements of a city that is very little known in spite of its artistic treasures.

Without trying to compete with the official guide-book, and without giving the practical information that such books contain, these notes may perhaps be of use to those travellers who have not time to investigate side issues, or the

even greater number who prefer to travel in the spirit, while sitting comfortably in an arm-chair by the fire.

I should like to express my thanks to the great artist Don Ignacio Zuloaga, to Don Valentín Zubiaurre and to Don Victor Macho for permission to reproduce their works. I have also to thank Sir Keith Smith for allowing me to use his excellent and typical photographs of Madrid, which were kindly procured for me by Don Enrique Alcaráz.

As this book is going to press, comes the sad news of the premature death of Don A. de Beruete, the Director of the Prado, a loss to Spain and to his many friends.

BEATRICE ERSKINE.

## NOTE

CHAPTER XXII., "A Great Woman Writer," incorporates an article by the writer which appeared originally in *The Contemporary Review* for August 1921. It is reprinted here by the courtesy of the Editor.



## CONTENTS

CHAP.	PAGE
I. OLD MADRID . . . . .	I
II. THE RACE . . . . .	8
III. THE GATE OF THE SUN . . . . .	15
IV. THE ROYAL PALACE . . . . .	25
V. THE CAPILLA PUBLICA . . . . .	34
VI. THE ARMERÍA . . . . .	42
VII. THE PLAZA MAYOR . . . . .	52
VIII. MADRID IN THE GOLDEN CENTURY . . . . .	59
IX. THE RASTRO . . . . .	71
X. THE PASEO DEL PRADO . . . . .	79
XI. THE PRADO MUSEUM . . . . .	91
XII. EL GRECO AND VELAZQUEZ . . . . .	98
XIII. FRANCISCO GOYA . . . . .	112
XIV. WALKS ABOUT MADRID . . . . .	124
XV. THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS . . . . .	134
XVI. VALENCIA DE DON JUAN MUSEUM . . . . .	147

CHAP.	PAGE
XVII. ART AND INDUSTRY	156
XVIII. THE THEATRE	164
XIX. SOCIAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE	177
XX. AN EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT	189
XXI. MUSINGS IN A LIBRARY	195
XXII. A GREAT WOMAN WRITER	205
XXIII. THE CHURCHES AND THE CONVENTS	218
XXIV. PEDRO DE MENA Y MEDRANO	229
XXV. EXCURSIONS ROUND MADRID	238
XXVI. THE ESCORIAL	248
XXVII. GOOD FRIDAY IN TOLEDO	259
XXVIII. EASTER DAY IN MADRID	269
XXIX. A SUBURB OF MADRID	277
INDEX	283

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	<i>Frontispiece</i>	
	FACING PAGE	
THE HOLY EUCHARIST . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>	
Photo by ANDERSON.		
PASEO DE LA CASTELLANA . . . . .	6	
Photo by ALFIERI.		
PUERTA DEL SOL . . . . .	16	
Photo by ALFIERI.		
PUERTA DE ALCALÁ . . . . .	42	
MULES IN A SIDE STREET . . . . .	42	
Photo by ALFIERI.		
CART DRAWN BY OXEN . . . . .	52	
THE FOUNTAIN OF NEPTUNE AND THE RITZ HOTEL . . . . .	52	
A COUNTRY CART . . . . .	74	
PLAZA DE LA CIBELES . . . . .	74	
Photo by ALFIERI.		
DETAIL FROM THE BURIAL OF THE CONDE DE ORGAZ . . . . .	98	
Photo by ANDERSON.		
QUEEN MARIANA OF AUSTRIA . . . . .	108	
Photo by ANDERSON.		
CALLE DE ALCALÁ . . . . .	130	
MONUMENT OF ALFONSO XII IN THE RETIRO PARK . . . . .	130	

		FACING PAGE
HEAD OF A BOY . . . . .		144
STREET SELLERS . . . . .		166
THE PASEO DEL PRADO AND THE POST OFFICE . . . . .		166
BASQUE PEASANTS . . . . .		182
TypICAL COSTUMES . . . . .		198
PASEO DE RECOLETOS . . . . .		238
A COUNTRY CART . . . . .		238
THE ESCORIAL . . . . .		254
Photo by ANDERSON.		
THE VICTIM OF THE FEAST . . . . .		278

M A D R I D



# MADRID PAST AND PRESENT

## CHAPTER I

### OLD MADRID

“Madrid, Castillo famoso.”

NICOLAS FERNANDEZ DE MORATÍN.

A WHITE town standing 2412 feet above sea-level, on a spur of rising ground set in a vast plain that stretches northwards to the Guadarrama Chain and southwards to the mountains that guard Toledo—such is Madrid. Villa y Corte, Town and Court, she is not, technically speaking, a city, and is as far removed from the bustle of a modern commercial centre as she is from the general appearance and the atmosphere of any other capital of Europe.

Madrid owes a great deal to her position. The bulk of the town stands high, the streets sloping down to the Manzanares on one side, and, on the other, to the deep furrow that was the bed of a torrent in prehistoric times and is now occupied by the avenues of the Prado, the Recoletos and the Castellana. To north and east the new quarters

stretch out some way, but to westward the town ends abruptly on an eminence, where the royal palace stands on the site of the old Moorish fort ; from this point of vantage a magnificent view can be obtained of the snow-capped mountains of the Guadarrama. Some of the older streets zigzag downhill until they reach the level of the river ; here and there a glimpse will appear of the dun-coloured plains beyond the Manzanares, a glimpse that has always the lure of the unexpected, bringing the countryside into the heart of the town. Possessed of three Parks, the Botanical Gardens and many open spaces in which fountains play, besides the leafy girdle of the boulevards, there should be enough of wood and water to keep Madrid fresh in the sultry summer days.

Modern Madrid is developing rapidly ; everywhere you may go you will find new streets being laid out, new houses built. The tall, white houses, dazzling white against the clear sky, have little to recommend them as to architecture ; were it not for the occasional glazed balconies or *miradores*, they would be without any characteristic note. It must be conceded, however, that fine broad thoroughfares were needed, and the new buildings are certainly imposing, even if, as specimens of architecture, they are disappointing.

No one can visit Madrid for the first time without being struck by the absence of any great monument of the past ; this is specially the case if the traveller happens to come from Toledo, with its relics of five civilizations, or Burgos, with its wonder-

ful cathedral, or indeed from any of the famous towns of Spain with their churches, their palaces and their universities taking one back to mediæval times. There is nothing of the sort in Madrid, and the traveller who, guide-book in hand, has spent a day or two in the Prado Museum and has visited the Armoury and the Escorial often goes away with the impression that there is nothing more to see. It is a city without the relics of an age-long past such as are to be found in other capitals, a city that sprang into importance at the command of Philip II ; even so, it contains very much of interest besides those wonderful collections of art that are among the finest in the world. Madrid is a jealous city ; she often hides her treasures from the casual eye. Priceless works of art are hidden away in convents where the rule of clausura obtains, bits of mediæval architecture are to be found in some of the narrow twisting lanes in the older quarter. Those who keep to the broad pavements in the main streets have no idea that there are others just behind the modern shops where the gallants of the Golden Century exchanged witticisms and where hungry scholars touted for the patronage of the great.

But, after all, the interest of Madrid, apart from the great museums with which every traveller is superficially acquainted, and apart from the smaller collections which he seldom visits, from the palaces with their art treasures that are not on view, and the churches and convents that guard their treasures closely, the interest is largely sentimental. Admitting that there are limitations, both historical

and artistic, owing to the comparatively recent date of the rise of Madrid, there is, surely, a story to be told that is worth telling. If the town began to be important in the reign of Philip II, it is connected with the greatest period of Spanish history, political and literary ; it brings before us the figures of the austere Philip and his greater father, Charles V, as well as the Planet King, Philip IV, with his brilliant Court and his neglected kingdom ; we see again the great shadow of Napoleon and the lesser form of his brother, the Rey Plazuelo, while the long struggle for liberty has left its mark here and the rise of modern Spain, its political and commercial importance, can be studied in the progress and expansion of the capital.

The first historical mention of the present capital of Spain is in the year 939 A.D., when Ramiro II of Leon, anxious to harry the Moors, stormed the " city called Magerit " on a Sunday morning, threw down a portion of the walls, entered in and slew the infidel " with a horrible slaughter," aided by " the divine clemency." The town was therefore already walled and fortified, occupying, as it did, an important strategic position for the defence of Toledo, the Moorish capital.

Ramiro did not attempt to retain the fort. The Moors built up the walls and the towers and continued to keep watch over the plains towards the Sierra de Guadarrama, then known as the Alps, lest any encroaching bands of Christians should return to the assault. A hundred and ten years later Fernando I of Leon destroyed a part of the

defences on his way further south, but it was not until 1086 that Alfonso VI of Castile finally wrested the fortress from the Moors. After this date Madrid remained in the hands of the Christians, though often attacked by her former masters, who, in 1109, established their camp in the garden of the present Royal Palace, known to this day as the *Campo del Moro*.

Alfonso VI turned the Moorish mosque into the church of Santa María de la Almudena, as it was afterwards called ; he and his successor, Alfonso VII, did much to improve the conditions of Madrid, which increased in size, in importance and in the possession of civic rights. As the city increased in size the girdle of walls was moved, and the gates were taken down and rebuilt farther afield. Fernando IV was the first King to summon the *Cortes* here in 1327 ; he also appointed a Governor and made a new system of municipal rule with ten *Regidores*, two *Mayors* and lesser officials. Henry III, aged eleven, convoked the *Cortes* here in 1394 ; John II began his reign in Madrid ; and Henry III made it his principal abode, living in the gloomy Moorish *Alcázar* where the wife of Henry IV bore an illegitimate daughter known to history as *La Beltraneja*.

It was the failure of Henry IV's legitimate line that placed his sister Isabel on the throne, and the marriage of this Queen, so well known under the title of *Isabel la Católica*, brought about the union of Castile and Aragon, the foundation of the monarchy of Spain.

Ferdinand and Isabella often brought their wandering Court to Madrid, but as they were incessantly on the move, owing to the concluding actions of the Reconquest, they did not establish themselves permanently. After the Queen's death Ferdinand convoked the *Cortes* in the church of San Jerónimo el Real, where he swore to govern the State in the names of his daughter, mad Juana, and her son Charles.

Charles v always favoured Madrid, which was considered to be extremely healthy. In those days the plains round the town were thickly wooded and water was plentiful ; the climate was therefore far more agreeable and less extreme than it is at present. When Philip II chose to establish his Court here in 1560 there was not enough accommodation for his numerous retinue, so he proceeded to cut down the trees in order to build houses ; he also issued a law obliging any citizen possessing a large house to lodge members of his household. The result of this arbitrary law was that only small houses were built, *casas de malicia*, which were not so taxed. Small houses in narrow streets were the order of the day, and the new importance of the capital was not marked by any great architectural effort as far as ordinary dwellings were concerned. One by one the churches were built, one after another the great conventional buildings were founded, with their chapels and enclosed gardens ; Charles v converted the Alcázar into a royal palace which still kept its characteristic gloom. As time went on the Puerta del Sol increased in importance, the



PASEO DE LA CASTELLANA



Plaza Mayor was built and became the recognized theatre for public functions, and the Prado was levelled and became the fashionable promenade.

The palace was several times partially or wholly destroyed by fire before the present fine building was erected, and the Palace of the Retiro was set up in what was then a suburb of the town, where now the Park of the same name is open to the public.

So, with the passing years, Madrid changed and developed, losing much by reason of constant fires and the riots and uprisings of lawless times, but gaining also in other respects. As we see it now it is a charming city, bright, open, full of life and movement. The air is particularly clear, and the houses along the principal avenues, which stand in their own gardens, have all the attraction of town and country combined.

Whether or no Philip was happily inspired when he chose it for the capital of "the Spains," is a matter of opinion. The position, in the very centre of the kingdom, is convenient, the situation, exposed as it is to all the winds that blow and to the scorching rays of the sun, has its drawbacks. Speaking from the æsthetic point of view, it is ideally placed with extensive views and on ground of such varying levels that few streets give the impression of monotony. Politically it was possibly the only alternative open to Philip that was free from offence to one or other of the prominent cities of the Peninsula.

## CHAPTER II

### THE RACE

"Race lies to-day at the base of all modern society, just as it has done throughout the unrecorded past."—MADISON GRANT.

**I** WAS watching the traffic in the streets of Madrid when I was brought insensibly to consider, or rather to make the attempt to focus, the national character and the genius of the Spanish people, the former of which offers such strong contrasts, and the latter which has given us an art and a literature that are, at once, the most realistic and the most idealistic known to mankind.

Now the traffic in itself shows greater contrasts than does that in most other countries. I was looking, at the moment, up the wide sweep of the processional street of Alcalá. In the centre of the street the yellow trams dawdled up and down in what appeared to be an interminable sequence ; they suggested the prosaic struggle for life, as exemplified by the human ants that were swarming in and out at the stopping-places. As I looked, a high-powered car of the latest type dashed up-hill and was forced to put on the brakes suddenly because a team of mules, drawing a country cart, had got right across the roadway.

the shining landaulet and the tartana laden with country produce, between the immaculate chauffeur and the slouching driver, between the silver and leather and varnish of the car and the trappings of the mules, was most marked. The mules stood patiently and doggedly across the road ; their high wooden collars were painted with rude flowers, from their harness, which was patched together with cord, hung gay pompoms of coloured wool and jingling bells. As I watched the driver succeed at length in getting his team under control, and the car, with an indignant hoot, speed on its way, there appeared the most typical sight of all, a couple of monumental oxen dragging after them a huge block of granite from the Sierra.

The contrasts observable in the traffic are only another manifestation of the contrasts elsewhere. The streets of Madrid are either very wide and paved with wood or asphalt or else they are very narrow and paved with cobbles ; the climate has the extremes of cold and heat, of hot sunshine and chill winds, while the country itself shows vast alluvial plains varied by chains of rugged mountains. It is apparent that the national character is only true to type when it shows a tendency to sharp contrast.

Now some people will tell you that it is sheer nonsense to talk of Spanish national character, because it differs so radically in different parts of the Peninsula. The hardy mountaineer of Asturias or Galicia, they will say, is quite unlike the easy-going, talkative Andalusian, and the Catalan, who

has a different language and literature and who aspires to have a Dominion state of his own, is totally unlike the rest of his fellow-countrymen. Difference of character, from a regional point of view, is surely noticeable in most countries, and that which we find in Spain merely shows the various elements of which the whole is composed.

The Spaniard is intensely race conscious ; the words " *la raza* " are always on his lips. He may use them slightly, contemptuously, sarcastically, humorously or admiringly ; at bottom, they stand for him as the key-note of his patriotism, and he resents any deviation of type either in individual or in artistic manifestation. It is easy to ignore the question of race, but in doing so we risk losing much that is interesting in modern Spain and in the mentality of the Spaniard.

Spain has always been more or less of an enigma to other countries. The very name, which is derived from the Phoenician " *Span*," the hidden or occult, the geographical position of the Peninsula lying at the extreme east of Europe and at the gates of Africa, shut out from the rest of Europe by the rocky barrier of the Pyrenees, have helped to keep up this feeling. And yet no country has been so persistently overrun by successive invaders as Spain.

The oldest people known to inhabit the land beyond the Pyrenees were the Iberi, belonging to the Mediterranean race which gave, when mixed with Nordic blood, the civilization of Phœnicia, Greece and Rome. To them came the Celts, wan-

dering tribes of the Nordic race, who first fought and then settled among the aborigines, producing a mixed race, the Celtiberi. The next comers were the Greeks and Phœnicians, who brought commerce and civilization in their train ; the latter established over two hundred colonies in Spain. The Greeks were emigrants who settled in the country ; the Phœnicians were traders who were finally turned out by the Carthaginians in 501 B.C., after which date the land was plunged into the long struggle of the Punic Wars.

The Carthaginians do not appear to have made very much impression on the conquered people, but the Romans, as usual, imposed their laws, their language and their customs on the land which they ruled for six hundred years. Then the Visigoths came in A.D. 402, in the name of the weakening power of Rome, and stayed in the Peninsula until they were turned out by the Moors. Barbarians as they were, the Goths were Christians of the Arian persuasion and they were good rulers after their lights. They framed laws, on the model of the Roman Codices, although we learn from the author of *España Sagrada* that they loathed the name of Rome and punished with death those who used that form of jurisdiction. After a time they were converted to Catholicism, and held Councils dealing with religious matters at Toledo, where they established their Court. Their rule ended in dramatic fashion. As the result of a civil war the conquered party took refuge in Africa, seeking the help of the Moors, who returned with them to win a decisive battle near

Algeciras, which made the Cross subject to the Crescent for nearly eight hundred years.

Seven hundred and eighty-one years passed between the fall of Algeciras in 711 and the fall of Granada in 1492. No wonder that the Moors have left indelible traces of their dominion on the Spanish nation. Their words crept into the Roman tongue, which had already taken something from the Gothic; their influence is evident in art, in architecture, in music, in many of the national customs, and in the character of the race.

The story of the Reconquest of Spain has often been told. It began in the north among the mountains of Asturias, where the remnant of Visigoths and Romanized Celiberians had fled from the Moors, to whom they refused allegiance; these valiant men are regarded as the nucleus of the Spanish race. From Asturias the torch of insurrection passed to Leon, from Leon to Castile; at one time the Spaniards pushed their victorious forces farther south, at another they were driven back to their mountain fastnesses. Meanwhile the country became extremely prosperous; agriculture and the industries flourished; learning was fostered in the universities to which the students of Europe flocked. It was an extraordinary mixture of races. Inter-marriages between Christian and Moor were frequent; the Court at Toledo was the resort of learned men and poets from all over Europe. Charlemagne, the upholder of Christianity, came to Spain to settle the differences between two Moslem tribes and retreated down the narrow Pass of Roncesvalles to

be plundered by Moslem and Christian alike. The Cid himself, the epic hero of song, served a Christian prince or a Moslem caliph with equal fidelity.

But through it all the clash of race and of religion persisted, the conquerors themselves being weakened by internal dissensions. The original Moors had brought with them the Berbers and the descendants of the savage Vandals who had been expelled from Spain by the Visigoths ; they themselves were expelled by the Almoravides, fanatic tribes from the African desert, who, in their turn, were turned out of Spain by the Almohades, followers of the Mahdi.

It is easy enough to dwell on the prosperity of the country under the Moors and to wonder at their subsequent expulsion when the Christians got the upper hand ; the loss sustained when the great mass of agricultural and industrial workers left is self-evident. What is sometimes forgotten is the fact that while Spain was fighting for national existence and for faith other nations of Europe possessed their own lands, however much they might be at war with each other, and the supremacy of the Christian religion was uncontested. Spain came out of the long struggle embittered and intransigent, and her pent-up wrath found vent later on in the fires of the Inquisition.

The fusion of the various principalities and kingdoms of Spain, cemented by the union of Castile and Aragon, enriched by later inheritances and conquests, made wealthy beyond the dreams of avarice by the discovery of the New World, formed

a kingdom that was, in its day, the most powerful in Europe. When Philip II made Madrid "the only Court" in the year 1560, it was the centre of a vast Empire and occupied a position of great importance on the map of the world.

## CHAPTER III

### THE GATE OF THE SUN

“. . . If the Gate of the Sun have now no material form, it continues to be the true Entrance Gate to the Capital of Spain; rather may it be said that the Gate of the Sun is Madrid, it is the century, it is progress, civilization, the modern spirit. It resumes all the good and it is the epitome of all the evil, it is the Alpha and the Omega of the life of Madrid.”—*Viaje critico alrededor de la Puerta del Sol, OSSARIO Y BERNARD.*

**T**HE heart of Madrid is an oblong space from which ten roads open out, arteries carrying the traffic to all parts of the town. For this reason, if for no other, it is a good starting-point from which to set out on a ramble.

With but little architectural distinction, the Plaza has an infinity of national savour and a fascination all its own that increases with more intimate acquaintance. It is also abundantly connected with the history of Madrid and is an almost classical field of observation for those who wish to study the manners and customs of the Madrileños.

Looking down from a height on the Plaza, it presents a most animated appearance. At first there is much that is strange to a foreign eye, but on second thoughts there is much that is oddly familiar, owing, no doubt, to the many books that

have been written on the subject. How well we seem to know this historic spot, with its many balconied houses, its shops and its cafés, with the massive Home Office on the south side and the square block of the Casa de Cordero at the entrance to the Calle Mayor! And yet, familiar as the scene is, it is less so than are the groups of people talking down below in the sunshine. For they are all there, those loiterers on the pavements about whom we have so often read; so much are they true to type that a first impression is apt to be tinged with recognition rather than surprise.

There are the priests, open breviary in hand, cigarette in mouth, the soldiers talking together with animated gestures, the women going to church with lace or tulle mantillas on their well-dressed heads, the beggars in all their squalor, a band of blind musicians tootling faintly as they stand along the curb, an old-fashioned countryman with the fast-disappearing cloak showing a strip of bright velvet where it turns over on the shoulder, and there are the inevitable old women and children crying on the passer-by to take lottery tickets.

The passers-by are, as a rule, less interesting than the stationary crowd. Nurses and children, nuns and soldiers, men and women with parcels and shopping baskets, they might have stepped from the pavements of any great city. But the stationary groups that remain for an incalculable time out there in the sunshine, talking indefatigably, are far more typical. Middle-aged business men, young men, women bareheaded or with mantillas, each



PUERTA DEL SOL. MADRID



group has its own character. What are they all talking about so earnestly ? Stocks and shares, political changes, a lucky lottery ticket, the price of food, the charms of Fulanita at the Teatro Apolo, who can say ? Threading their way in and out of the groups are the professional idlers—the Pirantes ; untranslatable word—and the pedlars with their little portable frames on which are hung such trifles as postcards, rubber bands or braces. In the centre of the Plaza is a tangle of tram lines and a congestion of yellow tram-cars ; across the road cars are dashing, hired carriages crawl, pedestrians dodge about among the traffic and a couple of mounted policemen — the celebrated pareja or “ pair ”—sit motionless on their sturdy mounts.

“ The Gate of the Sun,” says Edmond de Amicis, in his *Spagna*, “ is at once a salon, a promenade, a theatre, an academy, a garden, a place of arms, a market. From daybreak till after midnight there is a motionless crowd as well as a multitude that comes and goes to and from the ten great streets that lead into the Plaza.”

A modern Spanish writer, the inimitable “ Azorin,” writes charmingly about the Puerta del Sol in his *Madrid, Guia sentimental*, a tiny book that is one of a series. We must not talk too lightly of the Plaza, he tells us ; we must distinguish between one part and another of its hospitable pavements. In that portion that is comprised between the library of Fernando Fé and the Calle del Arenal a certain clique of notabilities are wont to meet, amongst whom, apologizing for his immodesty, the author

numbers himself. "In winter," he writes, "when from the Guadarrama comes a cutting north wind, when it is necessary to hasten through the streets, when there is not a corner in Madrid that is not a snow-drift, this bit of pavement in the Puerta del Sol is a veritable haven. The rays of the sun beat down on this spot with brightness and warmth and are reflected in the glass of the shop-windows and envelop us all with a glow of comfort. Some of those who frequent this bit of pavement stand beatifically still, some walk slowly up and down. It is for us that the pretty women of Madrid pass by, in order that we may admire and make eyes at them. It is for us that the sky above is of the intense and limpid blue that distinguishes the sky of Madrid. For us the diplomatists pass by in the Royal carriages, followed by a military escort . . . in short it is for us that the clock on the Government building sounds the passing hour."

There is no hour of the day, and very few of the night, when the life of the Plaza does not afford food for amusement or reflection. As night begins to fall and the sky becomes greenish-blue, with a flush of red and gold where the buildings to eastward cut the sky-line, there is a subtle change. The Home Office is now just a square mass of masonry with its little cupola standing out against the clear atmosphere, while the large dial of the clock shows up pale and luminous in the fading light. And then the sky signs flare up into the last flush of the sunset and one crystal star after another appears in the heavens.

Still the Plaza is full of life, but it is more palpitating and subdued. Cars skim past on their way to the palace, or to a "de moda" performance at the Opera ; motor-horns hoot, tram bells ring, but the traffic and the passers-by and the thinning groups of idlers have now something mysterious in them in the mysterious hour that comes to all great cities with the mingling of natural and artificial lights.

It is late, or rather early, before the last loiterers walk slowly away and the tram bells cease their petulant sound ; when at length all is still, the Puerta del Sol ceases to be the centre of modern Madrid and becomes a mirror in which you can, if you choose, conjure up a vision of the past.

It is easy enough, by the light shed by the works of painstaking authors, to reconstruct the Plaza as it appeared in the Golden Century. In those days the church of the Buen Suceso, behind which was the hospital of the same name, occupied the wedge of land that lies between the streets of Alcalá and San Jerónimo, the site of the modern Hôtel de Paris. The hospital was founded in 1438, when the plague was raging ; it was rebuilt in 1529 by Charles v, who converted it into a military hospital, afterwards adding the church which fronted the Plaza. In front of this church was an enclosure surrounded by an iron railing and before it was placed, at a later date, the famous fountain, which represented Venus but which the Madrileños called Mariblanca in honour of the Virgin. On the opposite side of the Carrera de San Jerónimo was the imposing mass of the Convent of Victory with the church of

Our Lady of Solitude, once a fashionable meeting-place for gallants and their lady-loves. At the corner of the Calle del Carmen was a foundling Hospital known as *La Inclusa*, which has since been removed to the Calle de los Embajadores.

But by far the most interesting church was that of San Felipe el Real, which stood at the entrance to the Calle Mayor, on the site of the Casa de Cordero. Built by Philip II in 1547, the architecture was sombre and simple, typical of the man who brooded over the plans of the Escorial, deliberately choosing the plain undecorated style and so ringing the death-knell of the beautiful decorated Plateresque or Renaissance architecture. It was along the wall of this church that there was a raised walk known to fame as the *Mentidero*—the late Major Martin Hume has translated this nickname into “*Liars’ Walk*”—where the wits and hangers-on of the Court used to meet. Gossip circulated here so freely that Moreto wrote that if he sowed the seed of a lie in the morning he found the corn sprouting in a couple of hours’ time. On the steps of St. Philip’s Church and on the *Mentidero* came, day after day, Lope de Véga and Góngora and many of the brilliant men belonging to the Court; as they watched the world go by, reputations were made or marred and gossip passed from mouth to mouth until it ended in a duel or disappeared in a jest.

Under the *Mentidero* were little booths where all sorts of trifles could be bought, with a speciality for toys. On the other side of the Calle Mayor there was a rough side-path along the wall of the

Oñate Palace where the painters used to exhibit their paintings in the hopes of attracting the notice of the Court. In the centre of the Plaza there was a market, and here, also, the water-carriers used to collect, making a picturesque group with their barrels. Round about were small shops where merchants displayed all sorts of wares with a sprinkling of coffee-houses where the wits for-gathered. Later on a grand theatre was opened here which all strangers were taken to see.

The general appearance of the Puerta del Sol has changed considerably in the course of time. The churches have disappeared to make way for shops, hotels and cafés ; Mariblanca has been removed to the Plaza de las Descalzas Reales and the stalls of the butchers and venders of fruit and vegetables that used to stand on either side of the fountain have vanished too. In 1768 the Home Office, originally intended for the Post Office, was erected, designed by Ventura Rodriguez but executed by Jacques Marquet, the decorative mouldings being the work of Antonio Primo.

On the night of the 15th of April one of those fires broke out in the Plaza which have been the cause of the destruction of so much that was interesting in Madrid. Many of the houses were burned to the ground, including the whole block between the streets of the Arenal and Carmen. Like the Phoenix, however, the Puerta always rises up from its ashes and is the pride of the true Madrileño from one generation to another. "Now we are in the Puerta del Sol," says the town bird in one of

Pérez Galdós' *Episodios Nacionales* to his country friend. " See what magnificence ! the buildings in the curve are nearly finished."

The Puerta del Sol has always been the scene of popular rejoicings and of popular risings. Lopez de Hoyos, writing in 1570, describes the wonderful preparations made for the public entry of the new Queen Anne of Austria, the niece and the fourth wife of Philip II. Her long ride through Madrid, diversified by theatrical " set pieces " with statues of celebrated Spaniards, with real lakelets in which real ships besieged real forts, by triumphal arches constructed with marvellous ingenuity, culminated in the Puerta. In the Carrera de San Jerónimo the new Queen had been presented with a crown of seven stars and with two golden keys, emblems of Love and Vassalage, Spain and America had offered her their crowns, all sorts of allegorical figures had been arranged in groups to do her honour ; here, in the Plaza, she passed under yet another triumphal arch before proceeding to the ancient church of Santa Maria de la Almudena where a Te Deum was sung.

Many other marriage processions have passed through the Puerta, many festive occasions have been celebrated here, the day of the Corpus being especially a festival to be noted ; but, in the end, it is the tragic rather than the joyful episodes that count in the history of the heart of Madrid.

The rising of the Comuneros in 1520 is the first fight that is known to have taken place in the Plaza ; the Esquilache mutiny came to a head here also when the troops had to fire to disperse the

mob. But the real baptism of fire was in 1808, when Murat's Mamelukes charged up the Calle de Alcalá and fired on the defenceless and unarmed citizens, who fell, many of them, on the steps of their churches. Inside the iron railings of the Buen Suceso Church the bodies were piled up, robbed of all valuables, half naked and sometimes mutilated, to be buried in the cloisters of the convent. The 2nd of May is an unforgettable date in Madrid and no mention of the Puerta del Sol, however fragmentary, would be complete without some mention of the deeds of blood accomplished that day by order of Napoleon's general.

In 1812 the Anglo-Portuguese and Spanish troops rode through the Plaza with Wellington and Ciudad Rodrigo at their head and received an enthusiastic ovation from the liberated people.

Those who desire a closer acquaintance with the events great and small, political and military, that took place in the Puerta and adjoining streets, can refer to the series of *Episodios Nacionales* of B. Pérez Galdós. In these sketches of the troubled times of the reigns of Isabel II and her successors, fictitious characters are introduced and the course of events is not very clear unless the reader has some knowledge of history; given that knowledge, the novels can be read with advantage as they give many local touches and have the great gift of conveying atmosphere.

A bronze tablet outside the Library of San Martín, which was executed by José Benlliure, commemorates the murder of Canalejas.

"Although many people have been assassinated in the Puerta del Sol," says Ramon Gomez de la Serna in his *Toda la Historia de la Puerta del Sol*, "the historic assassination is that of Canalejas, which can be compared to the murder of Prim. This other renovator, this other democratic liberator, was killed not so much by the blow of one man as by delay ; which is an idea and a symbol.

"He was standing before the library of San Martín, just as he always stood before those bookshops in the Plaza de Santa Ana, in the Calle de Carretas and in the Puerta del Sol. Like the President of the Council of Ministers, who liked to loiter along the streets, buying all the penny toys that he saw on the way, he preferred to be on foot. The booksellers looked at him from within their shops and the waiters, napkin in hand, quiet, unoccupied and curious, gazed at him from the café windows."

And then came the blow of the unknown assassin, delivered with such fatal science that the great man fell dead on the pavement, with a still open book in his hand. The motive of the deed was never known, as the assailant killed himself shortly after. The bronze tablet gives the date : November 12th, 1912.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE ROYAL PALACE

ONE of the first sights that is shown to a visitor to Madrid is the changing of the Guard in the Plaza de Armas. Leaving the Puerta del Sol we follow the Calle del Arenal, which lies on the sandy plain reclaimed by the monks in days of old, pass through the Plaza de Isabel II, with her statue in the centre of a small garden, skirt the side of the Teatro Real and come out in the Plaza de Oriente.

The Plaza de Oriente, which, by the by, occupies the most western position in the town, is the largest in Madrid. Guide-books tell us that Joseph Bonaparte, the Rey Plazuelo, caused a church, several convents and five hundred houses to be demolished in order to create the open space. It was wisely done, as were other improvements effected by this unpopular ruler, and it adds greatly to the imposing appearance of the palace that stands at the western end of the Plaza with the open Calle de Bailén between it and the garden.

The equestrian statue of Philip IV that stands in the centre of the Plaza was modelled by Pietro Tacca after the portrait of Velazquez ; it was cast in

bronze in the year 1640. Round about, at intervals, are the forty-four statues of the Kings, Visigoths and Spaniards, which used to adorn the roof of the palace

As we cross the Plaza we must pause to admire the imposing mass of the palace, which is composed of granite, with the jambs and cornices of the windows in white stone of Colmenar, resembling marble. Although the finest view is obtained from the valley below, where the greater height of the western façade gives additional importance, it is a magnificent building taken from any point of view. Four hundred and seventy feet square and a hundred feet in height, the main body of the palace is built round a courtyard; one wing runs on the east side of the enclosure known as the Plaza de Armas, another, ending in an open arcade, is on the western side with the Armoury at the southern end. Iron railings connect these two wings, but the great doors are always open and the outer courtyard of the King's palace is practically the playground of the poor.

As we approach the entrance to the Plaza de Armas, we see a mounted guard in a smart, bright blue uniform pacing up and down on a bay horse; his silver helmet gleams in the sunshine, the red-and-white pennant on his lance flutters cheerfully in the breeze. Within the enclosure the Halberdiers are marching, slowly and ceremoniously, watched by an admiring crowd. When their evolutions are completed, the crowd swarms all over the Plaza, prepared to pass a few hours agreeably. The

women squat down on the sandy ground ; some of them have brought their work, others put a hand-kerchief or a newspaper on their bare heads to protect themselves from the rays of the winter sun. Children innumerable play about, men and women sell oranges, beggars settle themselves picturesquely with their backs up against the railings. A beggar asks a passer-by to give him a light for his cigarette. The gentleman gives a light and a coin into the bargain.

“ Do you know who that was ? ” some one in the crowd says. “ It was the King ! ”

The palace that we see before us is of comparatively recent date, having been erected between 1737 and 1764. On the site stood the Moorish Alcázar which was so often partially burned, but was as often built up, restored and enlarged. Through its various transformations it appears to have preserved the gloomy character of the ancient fortress, although efforts were made to render it more luxurious. A good description of the palace as it was in the days of Philip iv is given by D. Auriliano de Beruete y Moret, the present Director of the Prado Museum, in his *School of Madrid* :

“ The King lived in the Alcázar. This palace was large and roomy, but doubtless it lacked the conditions which help to make life comfortable. Its origin was the ancient Arabic Al-cassar which had become the Castiello of Christian times and had been enlarged and improved in the reigns of Charles v and Philip ii. These monarchs received within its walls ambassadors from all the Courts in the world,

and here were to be seen arms and banners wrested from their enemies at Pavía, Lepanto, and San Quintín. In the reign of Philip III, trains of victorious Spanish generals no longer arrived at the palace and the glorious tidings of battles gave place to whispers about Court intrigues and affairs of gallantry.

“ Philip IV received the talent of the day in his palace, now called the Alcázar. Here he placed his magnificent collection of works of art, especially those pictures which now form the most important part of the works exhibited in the National Museum of the Prado ; in this palace Velazquez lived and painted nearly all his pictures, and here came Mazo and Carreño and all the notable artists of the School of Madrid.

“ The Alcázar, neglected and badly furnished as to the interior, nevertheless presented an imposing appearance as far as the exterior was concerned. What was wanting was a unity of construction impossible in a building which had been increased at different periods by the addition of wings and towers. The interior consisted of a veritable labyrinth of courtyards, corridors, galleries, apartments, chapels, oratories, rooms and even of small gardens which separated the different parts of the building from each other. In front of the palace was a spacious Plaza, on one side of which were the stables and the armoury. The principal façade was that on the south side, which had been built in the reigns of Charles V and Philip II ; it had great towers at either end, one of which, however, was not

built before the regency of Doña Mariana of Austria. In this frontage large doorways gave ingress to two immense courtyards, at the further end of which were the staircases leading to the royal apartments, which were very large and adorned with magnificent pictures. The northern and western façades were older and preserved that fortress-like air which the building had formerly possessed."

The old Alcázar was burned to the ground in a terrible fire that took place on Christmas night, 1734, in the reign of Philip v, the first of the Bourbon Kings, who had been chosen to succeed Charles ii, the last of the Hapsburg line. This King was the grandson of Maria Teresa, the sister of Charles ii; he was also grandson of the Roi Soleil, and had many of that sovereign's leanings towards magnificence. He resolved at once to erect a palace that should exceed in grandeur any that had preceded it, the vast extent of the last to be demolished no doubt inspiring him to make its successor immense in size.

Filippo Jubára, an Italian architect, was entrusted with the designs for the new palace, which he composed with the intention of placing it on the heights of San Bernardino; it was so vast that it contained, among other features, no less than twenty-three courtyards. When the King decided that he wished the new building to stand on the site of the old Alcázar, it was found that there was not space enough, and the projected palace was not begun until after the death of the architect, an event which some said was hastened by his disap-

pointment. Before he died he recommended another Italian, Giovanni Battista Sachetti, a pupil of his own, to conclude the task. Sachetti modified the original design and, cleverly taking advantage of the sloping ground, he increased the elevation because he could not extend the building laterally.

Entering the palace by the Puerta del Principe, we find that it is built on the usual plan round a main courtyard. The famous marble staircase leads up to the principal story where a glazed corridor runs all round the inner side. From this corridor we enter a long series of saloons, opening one into another, some overlooking the Plaza de Armas, some the Plaza de Oriente, and some the valley of the Manzanares.

The impression created from the start is one of frank magnificence. The exterior, with its Ionic columns and its Doric pilasters, is in the baroque style, and this character is emphasized in the interior, where we find a profusion of marble and of gilding, a wealth of ornament that would be excessive were it not all so harmonious. The taste displayed is, no doubt, that of the French Bourbon Kings, but it is a moot point if the Spaniards, with their complex mentality, do not appreciate magnificence as much as the castijo or undecorated style dear to the soul of Philip II.

The first room to be shown is the Sala de las Columnas, a large square room with the roof supported by marble columns. This was used as a dining-room until the body of the beautiful Queen Mercedes, the first wife of Alfonso XII, lay here in

state ; since then it has been used only for such ceremonies as the washing of beggars' feet at Easter, or the distribution of garments to the poor by the Queen. Passing on we come to the Throne Room with its crimson damask walls, its fine painted ceiling by Tiepolo—the best in the palace—with its marble frieze and profusely gilded cornice, and its throne with gilded lions. It was on one of these lions that the boy King mounted during his first Audience, being moved to this unregal act by a natural and uncontrollable impulse.

It is impossible to do more than note the general impression left on the mind by an hour spent in the royal palace in Madrid, admittedly one of the most sumptuous in Europe. Room after room we see, each one with something individual about the decoration or the treasures of art contained there. Every one has the walls covered with soft silk or satin from Talavera de la Reina, every one has a carpet woven in the looms of the royal factory, usually designed for the room in which it is placed. We come away with a confused impression of Empire furniture, painted ceilings from which crystal chandeliers hang, monumental clocks, priceless china, ivories, miniatures, bronzes, statuettes excavated from Pompeii, Oriental jars, cabinets filled with *objets d'art* ; in short, a thousand things that would repay detailed study.

There are not very many pictures since so many have been removed to the Prado Museum, but what there are are admirable ; I can recall several of Goya's masterpieces and a fine portrait of Queen

Margarita by Gonzalez. A vision that remains with me as one that is intimately satisfying is of a room with the walls hung with "royal" blue satin, which had some sort of striped design in gold forming a splendid background to one of Goya's most characteristic portraits of Queen Maria Luisa. Another mental picture is connected with oyster white satin with a design worked on it that suggested Japan; the ceiling of this room was composed of china with figures and flowers in high relief. It is the work of Gasperini, who was the Director of the Buen Retiro China Factory.

One of the assets of the palace is the view from the windows in the western front, especially remarkable from the upper stories. Looking down over the many windows and the Puerta Escondida far below, the great height of this façade is realized.

✓ The gardens, which were laid out by Philip II, but were neglected in subsequent reigns, and were only redeemed in 1890, are sometimes called the Campo del Moro. This name recalls the daring deed of the Almoravide Ali Ibn Yousouf, who established his camp here in 1109, right under the fortress then occupied by the Christians. Thickly planted with trees, and having fountains in the centre, these gardens slope rapidly down to the level of the river, a carriage drive zigzagging among the plantations. Beyond the river is rising ground also thickly wooded, known as the Casa de Campo, and to the right the Manzanares gleams in its stony bed as it winds away and is lost to sight in the far-stretching dun plain. To northwards the view is shut in by

the sharply defined silhouette of the Sierra de Guadarrama, a vision of blue and violet mountains with snowy peaks standing out boldly into a pure blue sky. And there, far away on the lower ledge of one of these walls of granite, is a faint dun-coloured blur which represents the Palace Sepulchre of the Escorial, seen at a distance of forty miles.

## CHAPTER V

### THE CAPILLA PUBLICA

THE Capilla Publica is a public function that takes place in the palace on the occasion of certain ecclesiastical festivals. On these days the King and Queen attend Mass in the chapel and afterwards walk in procession through the corridors, led by the clergy and attended by the Court. The public is admitted to the corridors, and there is usually no difficulty in obtaining a ticket, but on the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or Candlemas, which occurs on 2nd February, these cards of admission were difficult to obtain on account of the presence of the Belgian Sovereigns. Owing to the kindness of our Ambassador and Ambassadress, Sir Esmé and Lady Isabella Howard, I was able to be present, and I shall never forget the imposing and picturesque scene that we witnessed.

When we reached the corridor that runs all round the principal floor of the palace we found a mass of people already waiting to see the procession pass. The brilliant uniforms of the men and the uniform black of feminine attire made a very good effect from a pictorial point of view, especially as the

walls against which they stood were hung with some of those glorious tapestries that form part of the accumulated treasure of the Spanish Court.

The time of waiting passed quickly enough. Farther down the corridor a stream of people were entering the chapel, the doors of which communicated with it, and, by and by, the Queen-Mother of Spain passed in with the King and Queen of the Belgians, after which the service began. We could barely hear the music until the doors of the chapel were thrown open and the procession started.

It is almost impossible to give a picture of something that was so unusual and arresting, and that passed so quickly. The spectators were now standing three and four deep on either side of the broad passage, the women all in black dresses and black mantillas, the men in uniform. Looking down the long vista one saw all faces turned towards the chapel doors from which the choir now advanced, singing. After the choir came the Crucifix and the clergy of the Royal House with the Bishop of Sion, who had acted as Pontifical in the ceremony of blessing the candles, the Bishops of Plasencia and Ciudad Real and the mitred Abbot of Silos—a vision of austere black and trailing crimson silk. Following the clergy came the grandes of Spain in their dark blue uniform heavily braided with gold lace, and a quantity of officers. The Queen-Mother and the King and Queen of the Belgians walked with the King and Queen of Spain, all carrying lighted candles, as did every one else in the procession ; they were followed by the ladies of

the Court wearing evening dresses and white lace mantillas and by some more officers and officials.

After the procession had passed by, and the last light had flickered away, the spectators began to disperse, and we made our way up a small winding staircase which led to the tribune of the Duquésa de San Carlos, who had put it at the disposition of Lady Isabella. From this point of vantage we saw the doors thrown open, and the procession return in the order in which it had set out.

The chapel has nothing very remarkable about it, though it is lofty and has a dome that is painted in fresco by Corrado Giacinto and an altar-piece by Raphael Mengs. The columns are of marble, and there is much heavy gilding and, to the left of the High Altar, is a throne before which are faldstools and over which is a white canopy. To this throne the Spanish Sovereigns proceeded, the King upright and military in his bearing, the Queen looking very handsome in pale blue and silver with a diamond crown and a white mantilla on her fair hair.

The Mass was then sung, the choir being in a tribune near the one in which we were, and I remember the tenor solos in the *Oh Sanctissimus* and the *Ave Maria* being finely rendered. And then the doors were opened once more, letting in streams of sunlight which made the artificial light in the chapel turn pale, and the Spanish and Belgian Sovereigns went out, followed soon after by the Court. The function was ended.

On the way out we paused to watch the Halberdiers, who are the Palace Guards, march down the

great marble staircase which is one of the features of the building. They looked most picturesque in their Napoleonic uniform of white tights, long black gaiters, cut-away blue coats with red facings and three-cornered hats, bringing back to the imagination the days of the Empire. As we drew near, they began to descend the steps, slowly and rhythmically, holding the foot poised for a full moment before placing it on the stair below. One was reminded irresistibly of the great Napoleon standing there, on the landing, and placing his hand on one of the white marble lions as he said to the brother whom he had foisted on to the throne of Spain : " Je la tiens enfin, cette Espagne si désirée ! " adding the often quoted words : " Vous serez mieux logé que moi ! "

Another historical event took place on this staircase—the fight between Diego de Leon and the conspirators who came to steal away the young Queen Isabel II, and the Halberdiers who repulsed them. Eighteen of these men under Colonel Dulce kept the invaders at bay on this white marble landing until they were reinforced and the situation was saved.

On the morning after this ceremony I was lucky enough to have a private view of the tapestries, which are only exposed on great occasions.

The number of tapestries in the Royal collections is estimated at 1629 by D. E. Tormó Monzo and D. F. Sanchez Cantón in their *catalogue raisonné*. Of these 374 are in the Prado, 300 in the Escorial and 955 in Madrid. Large and almost invaluable

as this collection is, it is not complete as regards containing specimens of all periods. The earlier Gothic tapestries are to be found in some of the cathedrals, but here we have only one that is genuinely fourteenth century, "The Birth of Jesus," number one in the Catalogue. We have, however, magnificent specimens of the transition Gothic Renaissance and of all that wonderful period between the middle of the fifteenth and the middle of the sixteenth century that has been called the Golden Age of Tapestry.

Charles v, who was not only Sovereign of Spain but also the ruler of the Low Countries, and who was, moreover, Austrian by descent, inherited four collections of tapestry—those of Austria, Burgundy, Castile and Aragon. He was, besides, a patron of the tapestry weaving and an impassioned collector, as were the Catholic Kings before him, of all works of art. It is no wonder that the Spanish palaces are rich in tapestries of the best period.

Among the examples displayed on the walls of the corridor on that February morning were some of the gems of a collection that is accounted the first in the world. There was, for instance, the series of "The Foundation of Rome," which was bought by Charles v before 1528 in Brussels and is without the mark B.B. which was used after that date; there was "The Triumph of the Mother of God," four pieces that are considered unique in the world; there was "The Capital Sins" set which had belonged to Count Egmont, of heroic memory, and

the charming set of ten pieces depicting "The Loves of Vertumnus and Pomona," designed by an Italian artist and executed in Flanders. One of the most famous of the tapestries made for Charles v is "The Conquest of Tunis"; it was designed by Jan Vermayen, who accompanied the Emperor on his campaign, and executed by the celebrated weaver of Brussels, Willem Pannemacker. The order was given in 1549, with instructions that only silk from Granada and *filet* from Lyons were to be used, with gold and silver from mines within the Empire. The Emperor's agent stayed in Granada for over two years superintending the dyeing of the silk, using nineteen colours with from three to seven shades in each, and is said to have spoiled 160 pounds of silk before he achieved a peculiar shade of blue. The work was finished in 1554.

It was clearly no light task setting about the production of tapestry on this scale; orders were sometimes over a hundred years in being completed, as was the case in the fabrication of the celebrated set of the "Apocalypse." Begun in 1376 for Louis d'Anjou, it was continued for Yolande d'Aragon after 1417, for René d'Anjou between 1431-1453, and finally for Anne de France, daughter of Louis xi, in 1490, when the work was finished.

Many of these historic tapestries have travelled much. In the old days hangings made part of the luggage of the Kings and were looked on as necessities to keep out the cold in Courts that were always moving. Some of them came over with Philip the Handsome from Brabant, some were taken by Juana

the Mad to Tordesillas, by Charles V to Yuste and by Philip II to the Escorial.

A whole chapter might be written about the stories woven into these works of textile art. The old Mystery plays, with the Vices and the Virtues personified, live again here ; Fame and Humility, Pride, Lust, Love, Hatred, Envy, and a dozen other symbolical figures jostle one another, accompanied by angels and devils. History and mythology are inextricably mixed. The story, as story, is told with all the fervour and all the attention to detail that marks the Gothic spirit ; the architecture and the decoration, more often than not, is frankly Renaissance. As to the colour, it is often so rich and so varied, yet so entirely harmonious, that it is difficult to believe that it is the work of weavers who plied their bobbins five centuries ago, using the silk and wool dyed with vegetable dye and interweaving it all with gold and silver thread that still keeps its lustre. All honour to the designers and the weavers who built up their woven pictures with as much care and with as great a length of time as we should devote to a cathedral in these hasty and latter days, achieving, in their leisurely way, a work that will remain as a monument to an age that is gone. For we can, besides admiring the tapestries as works of art, study in them the story of the times, the dress and manners, the ideals and the mentality of the people for whom they were executed. They show us scenes that illustrate history more surely than many a book, and they have the additional grace of amusing us as well as opening our minds.

One lesson that is learned by comparing the older with the more recent tapestries is important. The older designs were made with a definite view to the art of the weaver; the later specimens aimed at producing a woven reproduction of a picture. In the fifteenth century the weaver was still paramount; after Pope Leo x commissioned Raphael to design for reproduction in tapestry scenes out of the Acts of the Apostles, his importance declined. If you can look first at the Gothic or early Renaissance tapestries and then at those of later date, the difference is clearly shown. The decorative quality of the former is far greater than that of the latter, and the whole effect gains because the design and the medium in which it is effected harmonize so perfectly.

I carried away with me an impression of rich colour, of wonderfully decorative composition, as well as mental pictures of historical and mythical characters, of angels and devils, of heaven and hell. It was like a breath of the Middle Ages, and I came out regretfully into a sadder and less imaginative day.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ARMERÍA

WITHIN the unpretentious-looking building that stands at the south-west corner of the Plaza de Armas is housed one of the great collections of the world.

A stranger, entering the Armoury for the first time, cannot fail to be impressed by the beauty of the scene. Here is no dry-as-dust Museum, but a splendid display of the men of war in their harness as they wore it when they went forth to tourney or to war. In the centre of the long gallery are horsemen astride on their big Flemish steeds and men on foot equipped for battle or joust, while along the walls are the men-at-arms and glass-cases containing weapons of all periods and of many sorts. Apart from the historical and archæological interest, even apart from the artistic quality of the workmanship, this delight of the eye must count for something to all those who, without having a special knowledge of armour, can enjoy an artistic *mise en scène*.

The base of the collection was formed by Charles V, who excelled in all warlike sports and who required much armour for use in his endless wars. Son of Philip the Handsome and grandson of the Emperor



PUERTA DE ALCALÁ, PLAZA DE LA INDEPENDENCIA. MADRID



MULES IN A SIDE STREET. MADRID



Maximilian III, the most celebrated jouster of his day, Charles inherited a warlike spirit. He actually wore the many suits that we see here, and he treasured the armour of his forbears which were preserved at Valladolid and Segovia. Philip II, though without the warlike qualities of his father, was a fairly accomplished jouster in his youth and he necessarily acquired armour in his turn ; he had also an orderly mind and a desire to keep up tradition, which showed itself in his work in connection with the Escorial. After the transference of the Court to Madrid he commissioned Gasper de Vega to construct a building near the existing Riding School ; when it was finished, he placed in it his own and his father's armour, adding the collections from Valladolid and Segovia. Here the treasures remained intact until 1808, when the Madrileños rose up against the French and, finding themselves unarmed, invaded the Armoury and took three hundred swords and many other weapons. These weapons were never returned and the collection was the poorer.

The next misfortune that befell the Armoury was in the year 1811, when Joseph Bonaparte decided to give a ball in the Museum and ordered the priceless collection to be turned into the garrets in order to clear the floor for the dancers. Here they remained until Isabel II made an attempt to have them rearranged, an attempt that did not accomplish much, however, leaving it for King Alfonso XII, father of the present King, to make the setting worthy of the jewels that had come down to him.

After three years' work the collection was classified and arranged, wooden effigies of men and horses were made and the armour displayed to the best advantage ; and then a calamity occurred which might have proved fatal. A great fire broke out on the 9th of July 1884, during which the building erected by Philip II was burned to the ground, seventy-two banners were destroyed, as well as twenty leather shields, many lances and all the wooden figures of men and horses, with their trappings and clothing. Some of the armour was a good deal injured.

The whole of the work had to be done again, besides that of erecting a new building. Nothing daunted, the King caused the present Museum to be built on the site of the old one, and he continually added to the collection himself, buying specimens from well-known collections abroad and from those of the Dukes of Infantado and Osuna in Spain. In 1893 the Museum was opened once more.

The late Conde de Valencia de Don Juan has written an admirable Catalogue of the Armoury, which is profusely illustrated. Those who desire to know something of the history and *provenance* of the exhibits must study its pages. Without attempting any detailed description of the beautiful specimens of the armourer's art that can be studied in the Armoury, we may, perhaps, take a cursory glance at the collection as a whole and note some points of general interest.

All the books that deal with this subject impress on the student that there are three phases of body

armour: the earliest is the chain armour, which was superseded by the plate armour, called the Gothic armour, which, in its turn, gave way to Maximilian armour. The best period of plate armour is between 1440 and 1500, that of Maximilian, or fluted armour, between 1500 and 1540. After this date plated armour became the fashion, followed by demi-suits and ending with its total disuse. We also learn that fashions in clothes dictated those of armour, and that armoured headgear was as various in design and often far more fantastic than that of women in that or any other age.

Gothic armour is usually simpler and more elegant in form than the Maximilian, and the accessories are more graceful in shape. The cuirass, though often plain, was sometimes richly ornamented, the epaulières, or articulated shoulder-pieces, the coudières or brassards, to protect the arms, the tuilles, cuisses, genouillières and jambs for the thighs and legs, all these, and also reinforcing pieces, had their distinctive shape and were often embellished. The sollerets, or coverings for the feet, were distinctive, being long and pointed like the shoes of the day. When Maximilian reigned a new fashion obtained and was named after a sovereign who was famous in war and in joust. The new fashion, besides introducing fluted armour, followed in shape the cut of masculine garments and also changed the shape and sometimes the name of the accessories. Great attention was given to strengthening weak places with reinforcing pieces. One of the innovations consisted in the steel petti-

coat or lamboys ; the shoes, too, were now short and broad and the epaulières became pauldrons of less graceful shape and often of unequal size. Maximilian armour, nevertheless, is of extraordinary beauty, being fashioned by the greatest armour-smiths and enriched by the best artists of the Renaissance.

Perhaps the best way of enjoying the exhibition is to take a preliminary stroll round the gallery before studying details with the help of the Catalogue. In this way we can admire the realistic effigies of men and horses, the shining armour of the Cavaliers, the velvet trappings and the iron and steel "bards" that protected the haunches of the steeds. From the casques of the former cascades of ostrich feathers droop, and the same adornment stands up from the horses' heads. Charles v is distinguished by great upstanding tufts of peacock's feathers in his helmet, and his horse's head is similarly adorned. Little Prince Baltasar Carlos, endeared to all who love the work of Velazquez, is here, sitting gallantly on his pony—perhaps the "devil of a pony" that his Uncle Fernando sent him from Flanders ; the boy looks as if he had been brought to life from his equestrian portrait in the Prado. Close by are six suits for children, made in Pamplona, and the figure of a great courser with armoured saddle and little flat helmet on his broad head. At the end of the gallery is the tent that Francis i used at Pavia and a battered old carrying chair which belonged to Charles v in his gouty days ; perhaps it was the one used in his long and uncom-

fortable journey over the rough paths of the Sierra de Gredos on his way to Yuste. Other objects of interest are exhibited in the glass-cases, comprising, besides weapons of war and relics of distinguished warriors, the votive crowns of Visigoth Kings, a fragment of the shroud of St. Ferdinand of Castile, the fragment of a Moorish banner taken at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, and many other relics.

Where there is so much that is admirable, it is almost impossible to pick out those specimens of the armourer's art that would best repay study. It is, however, quite possible to gain a very good idea of the treasures here, even for those who have a limited time at their disposal, by concentrating the attention on the most important part of the collection, the armour that belonged to three sovereigns—Charles v, Philip II and Philip III.

The greatest armour-smiths of the Golden Age of armour were to be found in Augsburg and in Milan, where, in many cases, the business descended from father to son. For example, Lorenz Kolman, who was working between 1490 and 1515, was Chief Armourer to the Emperor Maximilian; his son Koloman succeeded him and was, in his turn, followed by his son Desiderius. Koloman, who made the beautiful harness for Charles v, which we can admire in this collection, went to Toledo in 1525 to measure the young Emperor for his suit. He modelled a figure in wax, which was afterwards reproduced in lead, on which to fit the armour. Anton Peffenhauser, also of Augsburg, fashioned

the highly enriched suit said to have belonged to Don Sebastian of Portugal. Other famous Master Armourers, whose work we can admire, are Tomaso and Antonio de Musaglia of Milan and the Negroli who succeeded them, as well as the Piccinini and Mondrone, all of the same city. There are also examples of Spanish workmanship from the factories at Pamplona, but the fame of Spain rests rather with her swords than with her body armour.

It is interesting to note the way in which armour followed the fashion of clothes. The steel cuirass of the Maximilian armour with its stiff lines falling into the waist suggests the doublet of the day, and the lamboys was designed because of the puffed-out trunk hose in vogue, while the claw-shaped sollerets resemble in shape the stuffed and padded shoes, often adorned with jewels, that disfigured the feet of mankind. After 1540, plate armour returned to favour ; it was wonderfully enriched, engraved, embossed or damascened. It was lighter also and more mobile.

One of the fine suits to be seen here is that which was fashioned for Charles v, by Mondrone of Milan, and worn by him at the taking of Tunis ; another is notable as being that which was worn by the Emperor at the battle of Muhlberg in 1547, and also when he sat to Titian for that grim portrait that we know so well in the Prado. Yet another, a Parade suit that is wonderfully damascened in gold, and has a shield belonging to it that is a marvel of exquisite work, is also interesting as having been brought from Yuste after his death. There are also many beautiful suits which belonged to Philip ii,

from the plain business-like harness that must have pleased his austere taste to those embossed Parade suits that he was obliged to possess for ceremonial purposes. One of these was by Kolman, another suit was by Wolf of Landshut. To Philip III belonged a number of suits, many of them being highly ornamented. One of these has a lamboys with an engraved border in which animals are represented rampant.

The headgear is as various as it is wonderful. We see examples of the great crested helmets with heads of animals, flat tilting helms, the salade that resembles a saucepan with a peak behind and a chin-piece called a *mentonière*; the sixteenth-century celada borgoñana, conical helm with the head of a griffin in front, is as remarkable as the *yelmo de máscara* of Charles V, which represented the head of the Emperor, while the visor, which is missing, was a model of his face. There are, of course, many specimens of the typical morion, which the Spaniards took from the Moors and introduced to the rest of Europe, an oval helmet with a brim that is almost semicircular and is peaked at both ends.

The shields are of great beauty, as they lend themselves to the artists' fancy and to that style of decoration that was typical of the Renaissance. Negroni of Milan is the maker of one that has a simple circular space in the centre with a border engraved with a design of griffins, but most of the others are far more ornate. Countless figures massed in battle array sweep across the allotted

space, allegories are there and religious symbols. Of course the decorative shields were for use in tourneys rather than in actual warfare.

The swords require a chapter to themselves, for not only are there examples of the weapons of many ages, but many of them belonged to notable people. The famous sword "Colada," beloved by the Cid, once was included in the collection, but has now disappeared ; that which has been catalogued as his is now believed to be the sword of the King St. Ferdinand, who gave it on his death-bed to his son. That was in the year 1252. The famous sword of Charles v, said to be by Kolman, is here, a thing of artistic beauty ; we have also swords and daggers that were used by heroes of old. An awesome weapon which might have been that with which a King of Aragon, as Montañés tells us in his Chronicle, dealt such a blow to his adversary "upon his iron hat that his brains came oozing out at his ears," leads us on to admire the Sword of State of the Catholic Kings, the dagger of Boabdil el Chico, last King of Granada, the swords of Cortés, Pizarro, Don Juan of Austria and many others. Coming down to the present day we find that of the great Duke of Wellington.

There is a fine example of the Toledo sword blades, which were famous all the world over, in one that was made by Miguel Cantero for Philip ii. These blades were formed of two strips of steel from Mondragon in Guipuzcoa and of an iron core which went through many processes of heating and cooling, of being immersed in water and sprinkled

with sand. Martial of Bilbilis, a place celebrated even before his day for the tempering of weapons, has sung of "Gerone qui ferrum gelat . . ." and there was a superstition that the sand and the cool waters had special properties for tempering the steel. A Toledo test consisted in driving the blade through a thin iron plate.

## CHAPTER VII

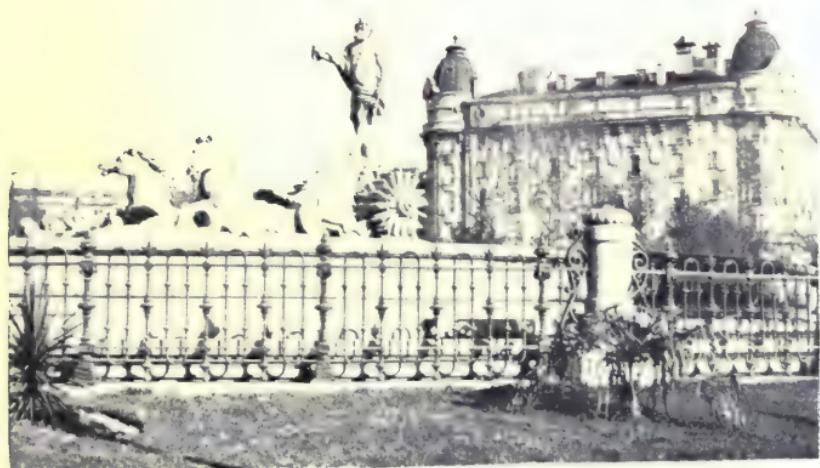
### THE PLAZA MAYOR

**I**CAME upon the Plaza Mayor quite by chance. It was very soon after my first arrival in Madrid, and the geography of the place was not yet impressed upon my mind. As I passed down the Calle Mayor, going towards the Puerta del Sol, my eye was caught by some picturesque fruit stalls to the right, standing up against the rough granite pillars of an arcade. The narrow arcaded street led to a lofty archway through which I caught a glimpse of greenery. As I paused to look, one of the ubiquitous yellow trams lurched through the archway, and I followed in its wake, to find myself in a large square, in the centre of which was an equestrian statue surrounded by a garden.

It was about midday, as far as I remember, and the square was crowded. Soldiers and civilians stood about in groups, women gossiped or crossed the garden intent on their affairs, people of both sexes and all ages waited about for the trams or sat on the seats that were placed round the statue. It was the typical Madrid crowd, talkative, good-natured and emphatic as ever; a scene of placid



CART DRAWN BY OXEN - MADRID



THE FOUNTAIN OF NEPTUNE AND THE RITZ HOTEL - MADRID



bourgeois life set in a square that bore the name of Plaza de la Constitución.

In spite of the altered name and the cheerful bustle of modern life, I knew it at once. It was the famous Plaza Mayor, the theatre where bull-fights, horse-racing, *autos de fé* and comedies had been performed for the edification and amusement of the Court and the populace. It is impossible to look at the tall five-storied houses with the multitudinous windows and the iron balconies that used to accommodate fifty thousand spectators, without visualizing the Plaza as an open-air theatre, without repeopling those balconies with the official dignitaries and the pretty ladies of the Court of Spain. And there, on a balcony before the Panadería, will be, surely, the Queen-Mother Mariana and her pale-faced son, sitting there, on and off, from seven in the morning until nine at night, to watch unfortunate Jews and the few remaining heretics pass their last day on earth. Anyone who is curious in the matter can see the whole scene reconstructed in Francisco Rizi's marvellous picture in the Prado Museum—marvellous because of its ingenuity and because of the three thousand figures that it contains. Personally, I must confess that I have no desire to dwell on these scenes, but there is something about the Plaza Mayor that leads one involuntarily to feel that there is there some sort of subconscious existence that cannot be ignored.

As early as 1492—that year of great events, the taking of Granada and the discovery of America—the Catholic Kings made an ordinance about lighting

the Plaza ; in 1494 foundations were laid of new buildings, and in 1591 the wooden pillars were replaced by pillars of granite. In 1619 Philip II ordered the demolition of part of the parish of Santa Cruz in order to enlarge its boundaries, having commissioned Juan Gomez de Mora to construct an entirely new Plaza, which he did in the space of two years. It was formally opened in the day of the beatification of San Isidro, the sainted husbandman, 15th May 1620. It is the statue of Philip III that now adorns the centre of the place ; modelled by John of Bologna, after a portrait by Pantoja de la Cruz, it was cast in bronze in Florence by Pietro Tacca.

The Plaza is not a true square, being 434 feet long by 334 feet wide. Rude granite pillars, square cut, make an arcade which runs all round the enclosure, within which are all sorts of small shops that cater for the wants of the neighbourhood. Standing apart from the rest of Madrid, with which it communicates only by means of the lofty arches pierced in its fabric, the square, although of comparatively recent construction, has a distinct character of its own. As a whole it is distinctly impressive and harmonious with its five-storied houses to which, in some cases, extra ones have been added on the roof, piled up, as it were, at haphazard, as the need arose. Although it has suffered, like so much of Madrid, from fire, it has always been restored in the same style, and it must have looked much as it does to-day in the reign of Charles II or Philip IV. To the north it communicates with the main artery of the

Calle Mayor, to the east with the Calle de Atocha and to the south, descending a steep flight of steps, with the Calle de Toledo and the strange quarter that has been swallowed up by the Rastro, or popular market of the town.

In old days the Plaza was given up to certain trades, each of which had its special quarters. In 1590 the Municipality bought some houses in order to establish a bakery, the Casa de la Panadería which we see to-day. The reason for their action was that the competition between the bakeries of the town and those outside the gates having become acute, they desired to protect the former. The balconies were to be reserved for public spectacles. In 1672 the house was burned down and the Queen Regent Mariana authorized a sum of money to be spent on its restoration, a fact which is recorded by an inscription : “Reinando Carlos II, gobernando Doña Mariana, su Madre, 1674.” The ceilings were painted by Coello and Donoso and the façade ornamented by the former with frescoes, which have since been replaced by those of Martinez Cubells. The Casa Consistorial, on the other side of the Plaza, has also been twice rebuilt.

The Comtesse d'Aulnoy, who paid a visit to Madrid in the reign of Philip IV, gives graphic accounts of the functions that took place in the Plaza Mayor. Although her historical accuracy may be doubted, and although she had the strangest habit of sandwiching in imaginary characters and events in what purported to be a diary of her life in Spain, the descriptions of Court life and functions are probably

correct, as they tally with those given by more reliable historians. We will pass over her account of the *auto de fé*, merely noting, for the satisfaction of those interested in the subject, that she paints the whole scene with her accustomed wealth of detail. We are spared nothing from the processions of the green and the white crosses, which took place the preceding evening when the green cross was placed in the Plaza, to the arrival of the Royal party and the Court on the morning of the ceremony ; and from the early morning to evening, through the long hours of the day to that moment, which surely must have been hailed with joy by many of the spectators, as well as by the victims, when the painted and bejewelled ladies, with their attendant cavaliers, left their balconies to be carried home in their great swinging coaches through the streets crowded with holiday makers.

In a lighter vein this lively writer paints for us a state bullfight that took place in the same theatre. Barriers were erected all round the place to the height of a man and the ground was sanded before the King and the Queen arrived on the scene. The balconies—which, it may be noted, had each a price varying from four ducats to twelve—filled up with ladies extravagantly painted and wonderfully dressed and with officials and cavaliers in brave array ; once more the great Plaza assumed its open-air theatre appearance. Beneath the King's box the Captain of the Guard and his officers, all in yellow satin trimmed with crimson velvet, were grouped. A fanfare of trumpets sounded and six horsemen

dressed in black rode up, followed by those who were to take part in the contest. In those days both picadors and espadas had to be nobly born and the latter, especially, were not allowed to fight on horseback unless they could prove their title. On this occasion the principal espada was the Count Königsmarck, who was magnificently attired in black, embroidered with gold and silver ; white plumes waved from his hat, his boots were white with golden spurs. As each cavalier was equally brilliantly turned out, wearing always the colours of a lady on the sleeve, and as each was followed by forty men on foot the procession was one of much splendour.

The King gave the key of the enclosure where the bulls were kept to Don Juan, and the Prince gave it to the officials who opened the doors and let one of them out. The contest that ensued was a regular duel between man and bull ; the former might not attack the latter unless he had received an "affront" from the bull ; if his horse refused or fell, he finished the fight on foot. Madame d'Aulnoy recounts the events of the day without enthusiasm, and is evidently relieved when the last bull has been dragged out of the arena by the gaily caparisoned mules.

Besides the bullfights and the *autos de fé*, there were Court festivities in honour of some event, such as a royal marriage, which might last a whole month. On these occasions plays, religious and secular, horse-racing and all sorts of entertainments were offered to the public. Up to 1762 executions were

carried out in the Plaza ; garrotting took place before the booths of the clothmakers, hanging in front of the Panadería and beheading, appropriately enough, before the butcher's quarters.

But to-day, when the Plaza is bathed in bright sunshine, and the linen hanging out to dry on the roofs of the tall houses shows up against an ultramarine blue sky, we must not dwell on horrors. Leaving these sombre memories, we come back to the present and must agree with Ramon de Mesonero Romanos, who says in his *Manual de Madrid* that the Plaza was well restored and that it was very elegant, although it had an appearance of irregularity and want of symmetry owing to the arches being at the entrance to streets that were at odd angles with the Plaza. The second edition of that useful little book was published in 1833, and it may be noted in passing that it was sold at the library of Cuesta, "opposite the steps of San Felipe el Real," which takes us back to the palmy days of the Puerta del Sol. In this edition he laments the bald appearance of the Plaza, which had been used until quite recently as a market. The statue of Philip III was brought here from the Casa de Campo in 1848.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MADRID IN THE GOLDEN CENTURY

**D**ON FRANCISCO DE QUEVEDO VILLE-GAS, Caballero de la Orden de Santiago y Señor de Juan Abad, one of the great satirists of his day, gives us a brilliant if highly coloured picture of Madrid in the Golden Century, in his book : *Sueños y discursos de verdaderos descubridores de abyssos, vicios y Engaños en todos los oficios del mundo*.

“ If you desire,” he writes, “ O my son, to see the world, come with me to the Calle Mayor, a place where every one meets and where you can see a great deal in a short time that you would have to seek separately elsewhere. I will show you the world as it is, the world that you have only seen as it appears to be. And how shall we name this Calle Mayor for which we are bound ? I answer that we will call it Hypocrisy, a street that begins and ends with the wiles of the world ; I assure you that you will scarcely find anyone who has not a house, an apartment or a lodging in it . . . some being dwellers therein and some only visitors. There are many sorts of hypocrisy ; all those that you meet here will have this defect in some way

or other. Do you see that man who eats like a tailor, but who dresses like a gentleman? He is a hypocrite, for, on feast days, you will see him attired in satin and velvet, wearing a belt and gold chain, so disguised that his own scissors, needles and wax would not recognize him. See that old gentleman, with his beard and hair dyed to make him appear youthful? and those muleteers trying to look like gentlemen of the Road?"

So far his hypocrites are certainly mild examples of the genus, but, as he goes on, he strikes rather deeper. A funeral procession passes by and he points out the undertakers' men chanting the litany, the clergy galloping through the responses, the widower thinking only of the funeral expenses and the doctor's bills. And after the chief mourner comes a procession of empty carriages, a crowd of servants and buffoons, who have been lured with promises and fed on hope, the rear being brought up by a mass of creditors.

The picture, of course, represents only part of the truth, and must not be taken as comprehensive, any more than the stories of hungry students and vagabonds, with which Spanish literature abounds, must be taken as the only type of the Spaniard of the day. Truth to tell, the Madrid of the seventeenth century was, even more than it is to-day, a city of contrasts. The Alcázar, with its strong walls and towers, stood up over the Manzanares, dominating the plains that stretched out to the blue, snow-capped Sierra de Guadarrama; over at the other extremity of the town, outside the walls, was the new palace

of the Buen Retiro, glittering with marble and gold, designed to charm a King, to make him forget the shadow of political misfortunes in the pleasures of the passing show. Then again the palaces of the nobles contrasted strongly with the smaller houses in those little twisting streets, like slits in the solid mass of the town, that went down to the river. And the thoroughfares, such as the Calle Mayor, the Puerta del Sol or the Alcalá, with their noisy rush of human life, surrounded the countless monasteries and convents, massive buildings with spacious enclosures, like a mountain stream swirling round isolated rocks. Beyond the hubbub of the Puerta del Sol, passing down the Carrera de San Jerónimo, was the delightful but unkempt meadow, the Prado, not yet levelled and made trim, the resort of the gay world by day, and of robbers and duellists by night ; a dangerous place where knives flashed out in the moonlight and where footpads lay in wait among the trees.

Although the Golden Age of Spanish literature and art began in the reign of the Catholic Kings and only petered out in that of Charles II, the most typical period is certainly to be found in the days when Philip IV held his Court in Madrid. The Planet King was a poet and a true lover of art ; in his palace Velazquez had his studio, and the literary lights of the capital met there to hold poetical contests in which the King took part. His Court became a centre of culture, and attracted many foreign notabilities as well as all the aspiring artists and writers of Spain. Court approval was

almost necessary for artists, and a patron was sought by a writer before a publisher. There were other centres of culture in the country, places where the treasure ships from the Indies used to discharge their cargoes, but they were rapidly losing their wealth and their position, owing to the decadence that had set in. The vast empire of Charles v was melting away, the incessant wars had reduced the male populace, and the exit of 900,000 Moors had left agriculture and commerce in a deplorable state. The Moors had brought on their exile themselves by their intrigues with foreign powers, and by their general antagonism to Christian rule, but the fact remains that the expulsion of the Jews and Moors ruined Spain. In spite of the unfortunate condition of the country, the capital continued to be the centre of gaiety.

Although we get many pictures of the life in the streets and of the adventurous careers of the great men, whether soldiers of fortune, men of letters, or both together, we get comparatively few of the women of that period. Shut up in the seclusion of their homes, attended by duennas and waited on by dwarfs, they had hardly emerged from the condition of the Eastern régime enforced by the Moors. The curtain that veiled them from curious eyes has been lifted for us by two women of such different type that we must believe their reports when they tally, as they so often do. The first of these is the Comtesse d'Aulnoy; the second is Lady Fanshawe, a woman of strong common sense, widely travelled, one, too, who preferred the Court of Spain to all the other

Courts of Europe, with the patriotic exception of her own. She speaks of the rich interiors of the palaces, of the furniture covered with tapestry, of the embroideries of gold and silver upon velvet, of cloth of tissue, both gold and silver, and of the delicate fine linen used for the table and the bedroom. The women, she tells us, are witty, and they all paint red and white, from the Queen to the cobbler's wife.

The Comtesse d'Aulnoy tells much the same tale, with more detail. The women, we learn, are small and dark and very agreeable. Their dress she frankly dislikes, especially the great crinolines, that are only used for Court functions now, and their way of dressing their hair. She gives a charming pen-and-ink sketch of a visit that she paid to an acquaintance who was still in bed.

Leaning back against cushions that were bordered with lace, the lady received her early visitor. Her hair was parted and knotted behind with scarlet silk ; her nightgown was long as a surplice, and composed of very fine linen, which was embroidered with flowers and fastened at the wrists with diamond studs. Her bed was gilded and had knobs of ivory and ebony, and her coverlet was of Spanish point interwoven with golden threads. When she rose to dress she surprised her visitor by locking her door while she put on her stockings, it being considered the height of immodesty to show the feet. She afterwards took a cupful of rouge and a large brush, with which she rouged, not only her cheeks, but her nose, chin, ears, under her eyebrows,

her shoulders and the inside of her hands. She was then scented by her women from head to foot, and one of them squirted orange-flower water from her mouth to that of her mistress, which was her peculiar way of having her teeth cleansed. We can imagine the critical, keen-witted Frenchwoman noting all these curious facts in her diary directly she got home.

Madame d'Aulnoy also notes the Eastern habits which still obtained among the great ladies that she knew. She would be received in a long gallery where they were all sitting on cushions placed on the floor, a sofa being for the use of the master of the house alone. At dinner they still sat on the floor, while the male members of the family sat at a table. On the whole, they seem to have led a dull enough life. The younger ladies used to work at their embroidery frames, but they had small inclination for it and much preferred to talk. No doubt it made a pleasant change for them to drive out to attend an auto, a bullfight or the fashionable *Misa de Dos* at the church of the *Buen Suceso*. This service, sung at the unusually late hour of two o'clock, became popular with the *Madrileños*, who were never fond of early rising, and here came all the gallants of the Court in the hope of seeing their lady loves. A touch on the fingers dipped in Holy Water, a whisper in the ear from some favoured admirer, and the lady stepped back into her swinging coach and was borne back into the monotony of daily life.

The men of genius who flourished at this time, and indeed during all the period of the Golden Age, were linked together by an undefinable hall-mark.

Whether it be of style or something in the point of view, they stand together as distinctly as the Elizabethans do in English literature. They were nearly all soldiers and men of action ; many of them had not only fought for Spain in foreign lands, but had suffered imprisonment both at home and abroad. They lived strenuous lives, received hard knocks of fate, were often cold and hungry, and sometimes dealt each other shrewd blows in the dark streets of the capital. Besides this experience of life, that so many of them had in common, there was the outstanding fact that the Spanish tongue was at last consolidated, that the native writers had thrown off foreign influence and were the real makers of a national literature.

Although many of the men who were making the artistic and literary history of Spain lived into the reign of Philip IV, some had already passed away, including the greatest of all, the immortal author of *Don Quixote*. Cervantes was born in the reign of Charles V, and was proud to the end of his days of having served under him, and of having lost the use of his left hand at the battle of Lepanto. After service in the Levant, and after weary years of captivity in Turkey, he came to Madrid to make his living by his pen. Finding that he could not support his family in that way, he accepted the office of tax collector and inspector of corn for the Government. Wandering about the wide plains of La Mancha, making acquaintance with all sorts and conditions of men in wayside inns and on the highway, he accumulated material for his astonishing master-

piece. When he returned to Madrid, he was sixty-two years old. The publication of the first part of *Don Quixote* took place in 1605 and had an immediate success, but the author was flung into prison a few months later because some one had killed a man and had thoughtlessly left the body at the door of his house. All through his life Cervantes seems to have had unpleasant adventures thrust upon him, and, although his book had all the success it deserved, he made little enough money by its sale. A Frenchman who was at the French Embassy in Madrid, and who knew Cervantes' first book *Galatea* by heart, asked for particulars about the writer. When he was told that he was "an old man, a gentleman and poor," he exclaimed: "But does not Spain keep such a man rich and supported out of the public Treasury?"

From 1609 till the day of his death in 1616, Cervantes seems to have moved about constantly. We hear of him in the Calle Mayor, in the Calle de las Huertas, opposite to the house where the Prince of Morocco used to lodge, in the Calle de la Magdalena, the Calle de Francos and in the Calle de León, then called the Calle del duque de Alba. In these transitory dwelling-places he wrote the second part of *Don Quixote* and the Exemplary Novels, or moral tales. The last to be written was *Los trabajos de Persiles y Segismunda*, which he was writing up to the day of his death, when he added the touching dedication to the Duque of Lermes, speaking of himself as of one starting on the last great journey, "with one foot already in the stirrup." He died on the 23rd of April 1616, on the same day, according to our

calendar, that Shakespeare breathed his last at Stratford-on-Avon.

Cervantes has left a little pen-and-ink sketch of himself as he appeared in his later life. Besides telling us that he is a man who has learned patience in the school of adversity, he presents his outward semblance to us in a few graphic words. We see before us a man who is neither tall nor short, rather fair than dark, a man with an eagle face, a curved nose, a small mouth with bad teeth under a large moustache, with hair that is still chestnut, and a beard that has been golden but is now silver. We notice that he stoops a little and that he is not so active on his feet as he used to be, and we agree with him that his maimed hand is a glory rather than a defect.

Although Cervantes died before Philip came to the throne, he was intimate with most of the men who adorned that Augustan age. Lope de Véga, the *Phœnix* of Literature, he sincerely admired, but perhaps did not altogether consider his friend, though he often met him at one or another of the literary clubs that arose from time to time. Here, too, he met Quevedo the learned, a faithful friend; Fray Luis de León, when he chanced to visit Madrid, that master of eloquence and the last of the poets of the old style; Góngora, the initiator of a new style of writing that was known as "Gongorismo"; Tirso de Molina, whose works were to inspire Corneille and Byron and many another of lesser note. Some he mentions himself, such as Vicente Espinel, the soldier poet, who translated Horace and added

a fifth string to the guitar; Luis de Montalvo, "a precious jewel"; and Cristóbal de Virues, "a Lepanto man"—we can imagine them talking over the grand old times together in this modern Madrid where warlike glories were forgotten. With the last phase of Góngora's poetic diction Cervantes had little sympathy, and probably approved of Lope's amusing skit, *La Culta Latina parla*, which ridiculed Góngora's "precious" phrasing, his adoption of Greek and Latin words, his affectation. But Góngora persisted, and many of his adopted words have become grafted on to the Spanish tongue. The most unfortunate of the band was Quevedo, who fell into disgrace for his too plain speaking and was imprisoned for five years in an underground cellar, which he described as being as damp as a well, as dark as night and as cold as January. He died two years after his release, his death being, no doubt, hastened by the hardships that he had endured.

Philip IV, the Planet King, outlived all these men of whom we have spoken, with the exception of Calderón, who became Court poet after the death of Lope de Vega. Velazquez died in 1660, the Conde Duque had died in disgrace and his widow had died in a modest house near the Prado. The old order had changed and yet the monotony of existence was the same. Every day plays were given at one of Philip's palaces, which probably amused his second wife, who was young and lively, more than they did a man who was torn by remorse for a wasted life. And then the end came. Lady

Fanshawe tells us that “on Thursday the 17th of September, died Philip IV of Spain, having been sick but four days of a flux and fever.” The wife of the English Ambassador went with others to see the lying-in-state. She found him lying on a silver bedstead hung with cloth of gold which was placed in a large room where he had died—“the room in which they used to act plays,” now hung with tapestries. The body lay in a silver-gilt coffin, clothed in a suit embroidered with gold and having stockings and white shoes; a white beaver hat was on the head, the hands and face were painted. Round the bier were six golden candlesticks, and two noblemen stood on guard, one bearing a crown, the other a sceptre.

The body lay in state all Saturday up to nightfall, when the coffin was closed and a pall of cloth of gold covered up its magnificence. At a late hour a small procession of men might have been seen leaving the Palace, bound for the Escorial, bearing with them the mortal remains of the Planet King, slung between two mules. How long did they take, slipping and toiling along the rough paths, mounting gradually up to the barren spur of rock on which the second Philip had placed the Royal Sepulchre? We can vaguely picture the scene—the men with their torches, the coffin with a lantern at each corner, a phantom procession in the night, with the lights paling as morning broke over the austere landscape. When the destination was at last reached, a procession of monks came out and the question was asked :

"Who is in that coffin and what do ye here demand?"

"It is the body of Philip the Fourth of Spain, whom we bring for you to lay in his tomb," was the reply.

On the 8th of October the Duque de Medina de las Torres, gorgeously attired and bristling with diamonds, proclaimed the four-year-old Charles II as King of Spain, and the great period of the Golden Age was practically at an end.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE RASTRO

“ Oh, the tremendous eloquence of the Rastro ! ”

RAMON GOMEZ DE LA SERNA.

HERE are various ways of arriving at the celebrated Rastro or bric-à-brac market of Madrid. You may take the tram from the Plaza de Cibeles to the Calle de los Embajadores —so-called because once, in times of plague, some foreign ambassadors took refuge there from the infected region. The tram passes down the Prado as far as the southern station and then turns to the right past the general Hospital and the tobacco factory, from which point you begin your pilgrimage, coming on to the Rastro country by degrees. An old witch sits on a chair on the pavement mounting guard over a bundle of rags, among which may be something worth looking over. She is an outpost of empire—the empire of the second-hand dealers.

If you examine her goods she will look at you with lack-lustre eyes, the filmy eyes of age, and she will probably show a philosophical indifference to your attentions that comes of long habit. A little farther off is a group of men arguing about the

price of some rusty old iron that is dumped down by the roadside. As you go up and on you get gradually into the labyrinth of streets and squares that have been absorbed into the Rastro, and the fun begins.

Another, and in my opinion a more interesting route, is that by which you approach the market from the Puerta del Sol, descending the Calle de Toledo, taking the fork to the right past San Isidro el Real, and arriving in the Plaza del Rastro where the market is in full swing.

Now, although we have called the Rastro the bric-à-brac market of Madrid, that is far from being its chief characteristic. A first glance round in the Plaza gives the impression that it exists to cater for the poor or middle-class buyer, the purchaser of the necessities and the utilities of life rather than those works of art that delight the collector. Round the statue of the popular hero, a private soldier who set fire to the head-quarters of the enemy—it is a poor work by Eloy Gonzalo and A. Marinos—are stalls containing articles to tempt the housewife ; the wide Plaza has endless dumps on its cobblestones of similar wares. You can buy almost anything here from a second-hand kitchen range to a new collar-stud. Bales of gaily coloured cotton stuff are piled up on the ground ; in the next patch are boots and shoes. As you look about you see old iron, fireirons, pistols, fans, stockings, teacups, bedsteads, pots and pans, Heaven knows what oddly assorted articles. On a Sunday morning the Plaza will be full of people, many of whom have

come in from the neighbouring villages for the day. The crowd is always interesting, but, from the point of view of the picturesque, it is rather disappointing. A Spanish crowd has always a sombre appearance, so many people, both men and women, being dressed in black. Perhaps there may be a man from Salamanca, dressed in black velveteen coat and breeches, with black leather gaiters and a wide-brimmed black hat ; he is a fine figure, taller than the generality of the townsfolk. Then there may be a couple of girls from the country, wearing bright coloured handkerchiefs crossed over their breasts and long silver ear-rings hanging from their ears. But these are the exceptions.

If you are new to this kind of game, you may feel bewildered, or even a little contemptuous ; but if you know the markets of Italy, or have graduated in our own Caledonian market in London, you will go slowly to work, trusting to unearth a treasure before the day is done. You will realize that the expedition will be amusing if not profitable ; it is also full of small surprises. A bullfighter's cloak, of sun-bleached scarlet, hangs on a nail outside a dark and cavernous-looking shop ; it is lined with yellow and the ends are weighted with a padded lining. A spurious Ribera hangs hard by, so you enter thinking that here is a curio dealer's haunt. But all you find in that dark interior is saddlery. With a glance at the painted wooden collars, destined for mules, and at the harness adorned with woollen pompoms and jingling bells, you are out in the fresh air again.

One of the first impressions that a stranger gets of the Rastro is that of its duration. Most markets have their open and close seasons, but no one can imagine the Rastro closed. In it a people that seem somehow apart from the rest of the Madrileños, more Moorish, or perhaps allied to the gipsy tribes, has its being ; here these strange folk live, day and night, year in and year out. Not only do they live in the houses that still exist, but they inhabit the back premises and the upper parts of the shanties that have been run up round the vast open spaces with a fine disregard for beauty or comfort. Among these dealers there are all sorts of types, just as there are in any other walk in life. You will find them generally civil and intelligent up to a point—that is to say, they have a shrewd idea of the worth of their treasures and do not ask excessive prices which they would be unlikely to get. An American friend of mine told an amusing story of one of these venders of unconsidered trifles with whom she had had many dealings. He once tried to pass off a false coin on her, which she refused to take. The next time that they had a small business transaction she cautioned him not to try that trick again. "Thanks to the most Holy Virgin," he replied simply, "I have already passed it on ! "

As far as my very small personal experience goes, I had the advantage of making my first appearance in the market under the guidance of kind and knowing friends, who guided my footsteps in the way they should go. Having made a good start, it is easy to return by yourself in order to study the



A COUNTRY CART. MADRID



PLAZA DE LA CIBELES. MADRID



atmosphere of the place and perhaps to pick up something worth having.

The habitués of the Rastro seem to me to be drawn largely from resident foreigners ; I am speaking, of course, of those who frequent the curio dealers. Some of these have acquired quite fine collections of lacquer cabinets, church vestments, brocades, books, lace, embroidered mantóns, Barcelona ribbons and so on. One collection of small polychrome statues that I heard of sounded interesting ; others were busy collecting lacquer trays with painted flowers or the really decorative furniture that can still be found here as well as in the antique shops in the town. Anyone who becomes bitten with the mania of buying here suffers from a fever that we might call "Rastritis" ; such an one will buy a clock although the house may be too fully stocked already, or pottery for which there is no place on the shelves. A real sufferer cannot resist a good specimen of the particular curio for which he or she has developed a passion. I can recall paying a morning visit to a friend and finding a pile of lace and linen on the floor of her sitting-room. "I couldn't resist it," she said regretfully, "although every cupboard I have is full."

The Rastro consists of a whole quarter given up to the sale of goods that are, for the most part, second-hand. If you go on Sunday morning you will walk along in a stream of people, laughing, talking, gesticulating, buying, arguing with the venders ; if you go on some off day, there will be less

crowd, and perhaps there will be less attractive goods, but a week day is generally the better if you are really out to buy and do not only want to see the scene. On some such day you can wander in and out of the booths in the streets or penetrate through some ruined doorway to one of the squares. Here you will find a wilderness of old stone and rusty iron, piled up in apparently hopeless confusion in the middle of the space, and all round are the shanties. Some of these are carpenters' workshops, some are for stone-masons ; among the others there will be the antique dealers that you seek.

The Rastro is an open book for those who care to read, and each one will draw some more or less luminous idea, illustrative of the backwater of life, set going not only by so many things that seem to speak of a past existence, but of the strange juxtaposition of some of them. A crucifix, yellow with age, is next door to an Isabelline fan ; one of those great Coro books, with initial letters rudely painted in vellum and gigantic black letter notes, if the expression may be permitted, is propped up against a musical instrument that looks as if it had belonged to some street minstrel who had stood at the doors of wine-shops. A dress that might have belonged to our grandmothers has kept an indefinable impress of the wearer. If you are weak enough to picture her stepping along on her way to meet her lover in the dark alleys of the Prado, on that fatal night when the moon hung low and the shadows were long, you are rudely awakened—as I was once on a somewhat similar occasion—by hearing a priest bargaining for

a coffee-pot on one side and a lady, on the other side, for an embroidered stole.

The Rastro has found its chronicler in the gifted writer, Ramon Gomez de la Serna. He writes his book because he cannot help it—an excellent reason—and because he saw it suddenly, in his mind's eye, already written. To imagine the book and to write it was evidently all one to the prolific writer whose written word has all the unpremeditated swing of his conversation. He has another reason for writing this particular book, and that is to check the output of descriptive books like the one that is now offered to the reader. These works, he says, are abominable and stupefying, a mixture that can only be described as horrific. Yet such is the persistence of the truly stupid that we not only pursue our road undeterred and unashamed, we even venture to steal an idea or two from the critic.

*The Rastro* of Ramon Gomez de la Serna is a book seen through a temperament. It is very like the Rastro itself ; it has lanes down which you wander, its very chapters seem like compartments of the market, and the side glimpses that he gives you of the inner sanctums of the dwellers therein are vivid and bear the stamp of the truly seen. If the author moralizes about second-hand things, there is nothing second-hand about his observations. It is not a book to read straight through, but rather one to take up and read at random. It is not an easy book to quote from, because of a certain verbosity which leads us down some charming bypath just when we think that we are jogging along the high

road. But it is distinctly a book to possess. As we walk through the Rastro, under the guidance of our author, we see many things that we should otherwise have missed ; and, here and there, we note a suggestive phrase. The market is likened to some desolate strand to which the great towns send their rubbish, borne along on waves which retreat, leaving the things embedded in the sand ; it is the sport of the sea, a sea that has the bluest and the darkest waters, that sends all its flotsam and jetsam to the isolated shore where they wait their turn to be caught up by the surf. Perhaps one of his most striking reflections is the one that comes to him when watching the stone-masons at work on the tombstones. The irony of making a permanent memorial, or one that should be permanent, in a place where everything speaks of change and decay, is certainly obvious enough once the idea has presented itself. It is, perhaps, the key-note of the strange symphony of the Rastro to which he who will may listen as he bargains for some trifle that he does not want, and that will, most likely, find its way back to some such desert shore to wait its turn to be caught up again by the surf.

## CHAPTER X

### THE PASEO DEL PRADO

"The sons of Madrid are, generally speaking, perceptive, satirical, endowed with a charming amiability and very keen about following the fashion."—RAMON DE MESONERO ROMANOS.

**W**HAT the Puerta del Sol was to the wits of the Golden Century, the Paseo del Prado was to the politicians as well as to the literary and social elements of the days of crinolines and shawls, of tight-waisted blue coats and balloon trousers. This is certainly the most typical period of the Paseo, although it has always been a favourite promenade, and has often been the scene of the pageants and the Royal progresses of earlier days. Historians have chronicled the wonderful happenings that celebrated the arrival of some royal bride with praiseworthy minuteness, but later times have left a stronger impress on our minds. The massacres of the 2nd of May, in 1808, gave the Paseo its baptism of blood ; we see the small, slight figure of Goya pass by, thrilled with the horror of a scene which he produces when his mind was warped by the troubled times through which his country had passed. And so we get gradually to the classic period of 1830, when the Salon del Prado was really the draw-

ing-room of Madrid by day, although it was still the resort of clandestine lovers, duellists and footpads by night. Prominent among the figures that suggest themselves as having played their part in the drama of the day is that of Mariano de Larra, better known as "Figaro," that immaculate figure, clad always in a blue frock-coat, duck trousers, a tall hat and blue boots. A tragic figure, too, destined to cut short his brilliant career by his own act, on account of an unhappy love affair. Born in 1809, the year following the massacres, he lived in a time of transition. As a satirist he soon made his mark, and became famous while still quite young through the articles signed "El pobreclito hablador," a name he afterwards deserted for that of "Figaro"; his writings are still well thought of by his fellow-countrymen, but the part of him that really lives is his personality. The Larra of the blue coat, the Romantic who lived his life romantically, still haunts the shady avenues of the Paseo del Prado, where, if report speaks true, he took his last walk before cutting the thread that should be divided only by the Fates.

The Paseo del Prado is now only a small part of the long line of the avenues that cuts through Madrid, and its glory has departed, society having moved up north to the Recoletos, and even more to the Castellana. If you leave the Puerta del Sol on some fine morning in winter and stroll down the Alcalá you will find in that street a seething mass of humanity. People swarm all over the broad pavements, taking a midday stroll. They stop sometimes to enter the

shops, more often to read the latest news posted up on the newspaper kiosks ; they are talkative, cheerful, seldom in a hurry. The present is far more amusing than the past, but we may note, in passing, that just off the street was the House with the Seven Chimneys, once inhabited by the English Ambassador, and that here, in the year of grace 1623, two young men alighted from their horses and demanded admission. One of them was admitted, and the other, a tall, fair gallant, with a spark of the spirit of adventure in his blue eyes, remained outside to hold the horses. In a very few moments the Ambassador, petrified with astonishment and foreseeing endless political complications, came down to welcome the Prince of Wales, who had been lured on to make a surprise visit in order to hasten the arrangements for his marriage with the Infanta Maria.

To the left, as we descend the Alcalá, we must notice the War Office standing high in a garden above the street. This fine palace was built for the celebrated Duquésa de Alba, so often painted by Goya ; it was then the residence of Godoy, the powerful and unpopular Minister of Charles IV ; but after the abdication of the King and the disgrace of the favourite it was confiscated by the government. General Espartero lived here from 1841 to 1843, and General Prim from 1869 to the 29th of December 1870, on which day he was assassinated at the corner of the Calle del Marqués de Cubas. To the right is another palace, built in 1884-1891 ; it is now the property of the Bank of Spain.

The Plaza de Cibeles, which lies at the point where the Paseo del Prado and the Recoletos meet, divides the better known portion of the Calle de Alcalá from the continuation that passes through the Plaza de la Independencia and goes on to the Ventas del Espíritu Santo, at the extreme east end of the town. The Puerta de Alcalá, which stands in the Plaza de Independencia at the entrance to the gardens of the Buen Retiro, is a triumphal arch erected in 1778 by Charles III, the architect being the Italian Sabatini.

In the centre of the Plaza de Cibeles is the fountain from which it takes its name, a charming work by Robert Michel and Francisco Gutierrez. The goddess, seated in her white marble car, drives a pair of lions with a loose rein ; beyond the fountain the magnificent palace or temple that enshrines the Post Office rears its imposing façade. The Madrileños call it "Our Lady of the Communications," which reminds us that they are fond of nicknames. A little farther on is a white marble Bank which they have named "El Mausoleo de los accionistas"—the mausoleum of the shareholders—a name that fits its outer appearance so well that we can only hope that it does not apply to its inner workings.

If you follow the Recoletos, once dominated by the monastery of Augustine monks who had settled there in the latter part of the sixteenth century, you arrive at the Plaza de Colón with its tall column on which Christopher Columbus stands in a deprecating attitude, where also the palace of the Duque de Medinaceli is situated. Just before reaching the

Plaza you will have seen the long façade of the palace containing the National Museums which we must enter before long. Beyond the Plaza de Colón, the newest of the Paseos, the Castellana lies with its palaces and villas standing in gardens and with the fine streets, many of them newly built, that run down from the higher ground to the level of the boulevard. On a fine morning the Castellana will present an animated appearance. Nurses and children there are in plenty, and even the society women, who are not over-fond of exercise, will be taking a turn before lunch. On Sunday morning the Paseo is quite gay, for there is always a Church parade which, added to the holiday crowd, makes a pretty scene.

The climate of Madrid is almost—not quite!—as unjustly abused as that of London ; it is supposed to be particularly dangerous in the boulevards, where the sun beats down, and through which the north winds whistle. It is true that there is a good deal of wind, but it is a clean, wholesome wind that has been shot through with the sun's rays. And then the sun is so good ! The peculiar blue of Spanish skies, the pleasant warmth of the sun's rays, even in winter, make the climate of Madrid a joy when the weather is kind. When it is not—and there is more wet weather than you expect—I know nothing more depressing. I remember a day when the town seemed to swim in mud, and when a *pompier*, disregarding the torrents of rain that were falling from above, spouted streams of water from his long hose on to the muddy street. Cigarette in mouth, he

pursued his task, shooting out his cascade with unerring aim, just missing, by a hairbreadth, the scurrying pedestrians and the passing vehicles. Just then one of the frequent child's funerals appeared, the hearse with a tiny white coffin, the mourners trudging on foot, the horses shaking their heads decorated with sodden white plumes—not a cheerful picture of the city that has been called the “place of the Sun.” But then there is the other side to consider. I can think of golden days when it was pleasant to sit in the shade in the Castellana, of an afternoon when the sun was so hot on a balcony at the top of a house in the Gran Via that I was tempted to put up a parasol. It was more like an afternoon in May than one in January.

Leaving the Castellana, which stretches some way farther towards the north, and returning by the Recoletos to the Prado, we find ourselves once more on historic ground. There, to the left, is the obelisk that commemorates the Dos de Mayo; behind it, by the by, is the modern Bourse and the Hôtel Ritz. The Carrera de San Jerónimo, once called the Calle del Sol, comes down to the Plaza de Cánovas; a little way up to the right is the pseudo-classic House of Deputies, to the left the Plaza de las Cortes, with a statue of Cervantes, between which and the fountain of Neptune is the other big hotel of Madrid, the *Palace*. But we have no eyes for these things because we have caught sight of a long building with columns in the centre, a building that holds one of the finest collections of pictures in the world—the Museo del Prado.

Over above the Museum is the Church of San Jerónimo el Real, where so many events of historical importance have taken place ; skirting round by the side of the Museum is the Calle de Felipe IV, which leads to all that is left of his fine palace of the Buen Retiro, the Banqueting Hall, known as the “Cason de Felipe IV,” which is now used as a gallery of reproductions for the use of students, and the Artillery Museum standing by itself to the left of the street.

The original Prado went as far as the Convent of Atocha, the Prado de Toya, or Atocha, being a prolongation to the south. In the reign of Charles III, who did so much for Madrid, this wild, uncultivated meadow was levelled and planted out following a suggestion of the Count of Aranda. Statues and fountains were erected, trees planted, and it soon became even more popular than before. In the same reign, in the year 1774, the Botanical Gardens, which are separated from the Paseo by a railing, were opened. It is in this part of the Prado that the annual book fair is held to which enthusiasts still come in the forlorn hope of picking up one of those early printed books that delight the soul of a collector.

In the centre of the Salon del Prado, the central portion of the Paseo, is a clear space in front of the fountain of Apollo, erected in 1780 by Ventura Rodriguez ; the statues of the Sun God and four Seasons were finished, after his death, by Manuel Álvarez. How changed is the scene from the palmy days of yore ! A beggar sleeps on a bench

in the sunshine ; some poor children play a noisy game ; a very old woman, arm in arm with a young girl, totters up and sits down heavily in a neighbouring chair. We must rest a moment and strive, however feebly, to repeople the scene with those bright spirits who came here in what were for the Prado “ the good old days.”

From the year 1570, when loyal Madrileños assembled in their hundreds to welcome a royal bride, erecting all sorts of set pieces in the Prado in her honour, up to the present time, many processions have passed along this historic ground. The young Princess, magnificently attired and wearing the pearl “ Peregrina ” in her breast and on her head a hat with nodding plumes of crimson and white, is little more than a lay figure for us, in spite of the descriptive power of Juan Lopez de Hoyos. The great funeral processions touch us more nearly, especially that one which called forth a demonstration of public enthusiasm, the state obsequies of the heroes of the Second of May, Luis Daoiz and Pedro Velarde. Mourning and rejoicing, funeral pomp and Carnival revels, civic processions and Military display have all had a part in the history of the Prado. But the real interest attaching to it is something more intimately personal.

Here Cervantes came from his lodgings beyond the Calle del Prado, and his favourite walk was in his mind when he wrote the lines : “ Farewell, I said to my humble cabin, farewell, Madrid, farewell you Prado and fountains which produce nectar and from which ambrosia springs.” Lope, too, has

immortalized the Prado, as have, indeed, many other writers.

As we advance along succeeding generations, which we can do with the help of old engravings even more than by the light of descriptive writings, we find ladies in hoops and farthingales and gentlemen in long skirted coats, tight breeches and three-cornered hats, strolling about, while others are carried over the uneven ground in sedan-chairs or in the clumsy coaches drawn by Flemish horses. But it is not until the dawn of the nineteenth century, when another literary revival was beginning, that the Prado comes to what may be called the classic period. From that time on to about 1850, the Prado was really the social and political centre of Madrid, although it was still given up to lovers and duellists and other disturbers of the public peace, by night.

In days of stress, when so much was in the melting-pot and Spain was still torn by internal conflicts, Larra would come here to meditate on some slashing article denouncing politics or social evils. Perhaps he thought over that article concerning "The Day of the Dead," in which he provided tombstones and epitaphs for most of the institutions of his country, ending up with one for his own heart, for that too was a sepulchre: "Here lies Hope," so ran the legend. "Silence!!! Silence!!!! . . ."

With "Figaro" would come his friend Espronceda, poet and novelist, remembered chiefly because of his caustic *Diablo Mundo* and his beautiful *Canto a Teresa*, a man of Byronic mould, who lived the

romantic life strenuously and died at the early age of thirty-three. The Duque de Rivas was another notable figure in those times, one whose dramatic work had a great influence on contemporary Spanish literature. He was with Figaro on the day of his death, and so was Ramon de Mesonero Romanos, then known to fame as the "Curioso Parlante," to whom we are indebted for much useful information concerning Madrid. These two—Ramon and "Figaro"—were united in the bonds of a close friendship, although they were by nature so opposed to one another, and it may be said that the former carried on, to a certain extent, the work of the latter. And yet one was all genius and the other only talent. To this little group we might add the dignified Zorrilla, the national poet, who was to arrest public attention by the verses that he declaimed at the grave of Larra in 1837.

Eleven years later, in 1848, a party of Frenchmen came to Madrid to be present at the wedding of Queen Isabel II; among these were Victor Hugo and Théophile Gautier. The latter, as a student of human nature, looked forward to seeing two things particularly in the capital—the Puerta del Sol and the Paseo del Prado. Of the latter he has left a graphic picture.

Spain has always been famous for late hours, and we are not surprised to learn that the fashionable time to walk in the Prado was between half-past seven and ten o'clock in the evening. The Salon was always crowded, Gautier tells us, but it was as nothing to the walk by the carriage drive which

went by the name of “Paris.” Here the gay world collected in such strength that it was a difficult matter to get your handkerchief out of your pocket when you wanted to blow your nose, so closely were you packed together. We can imagine Gautier, the genial Bohemian, with his long hair and his wide-brimmed hat and his carelessly artistic clothing, making fun of the Madrid dandies ; they, no doubt, returning the compliment. He bemoans the ultra-fashionable appearance of the men and the crinolines and “hideous shawls” of the women, but is consoled by the charm of the mantilla, which he finds in general use by all classes. He notices the carriages, which he finds shabby, especially when drawn by mules, but he admires the beautiful Andalusian saddle-horses with their long manes and tails and the reins decorated with red tassels. The water-carriers go up and down, crying out : “Water, who wants water ? iced water, fresh as snow !”—a custom that surprises him not a little.

After seeing Madrid through French eyes, or English eyes for the matter of that, it is always useful to go back to Spanish sources. Only in this way can we get, even approximately, to an idea of that evanescent thing, so difficult to capture, so impossible to convey, the national savour of the country. And if books fail, we can always fall back on the ever-open book that lies before us. After all, the people we see to-day in Madrid are still as true to type as were their forefathers. The beggar, who has just woken up, might have stepped bodily out of a canvas of Velazquez ; the small boys who are

playing football with some oranges before piling them up for sale are the direct descendants of the street urchins immortalized by Murillo. And those two girls who are passing might well have been specimens of the "Manola" genus, that elusive type that Gautier hunted for in vain and which he feared must be as extinct as the Paris grisette. And, surely, there is a faint sound of music, as of some ghostly hand touching immaterial harp strings, just over there, opposite the Apollo fountain. . . .

## CHAPTER XI

### THE PRADO MUSEUM: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

WE have at last reached the threshold of the great Picture Gallery, where, as lovers of art, we should certainly have stood on the first morning of our first stay in Madrid. But it is not during these first visits that we pause to consider the history of the gallery and its contents. We should be more likely to rush to the rooms containing the works of Velazquez, which can be studied here as they can in no other gallery in the world, before gaining any idea of the collection as a whole. I am not ashamed to confess that I came away from Madrid, after two short visits, without knowing more of the Prado than the Velazquez rooms, those devoted to Goya and a few isolated works by El Greco. The long gallery with its glowing Titians, with the wonderful series of Rubens, with examples of the Schools of Venice and the Low Countries, the galleries devoted to portraits, containing many a masterpiece, the French Schools, the Primitives, the Sculpture galleries—all these remained in the mind with an impression of bewildering beauty. But for something intimately seen and studied, the

mind always harked back to the Oval room with the portraits of Kings and Queens, statesmen and heroes, dwarfs and beggars. In this room, hung on a wall that was painted with a peculiarly evil shade of brick-dust red, were the masterpieces of the greatest artist of the Spanish School. Austere in colour, simple in composition, apparently simple in technique, these wonderful pictures not only delight the connoisseur, they make a whole generation live again for the delectation of the inhabitants of what is, practically, another world.

The nucleus of the collection now housed in the Prado was formed by Charles v. He inherited works of art from Burgundy, Flanders and Austria, and received many valuable presents, especially the sculpture sent to him by the Pope Paul III. He also encouraged the art of his day and ordered pictures and statuary from the artists attached to his Court. Philip II, although more intent on adorning the Escorial than on increasing the Royal collections, augmented them considerably, and he received gifts including those from Cardinal Montepulciano in 1561. Philip IV contributed the invaluable works of Velazquez and other artists of the Golden Century; he commissioned Velazquez to go to Italy to buy works of art, about three hundred of which are now housed in the Prado. He also bought many pictures that had belonged to Charles I of England, after the brutal murder of that King. Velazquez drew up a document that he called: "A Memorial of the Paintings which the Catholic Majesty of our Lord Don Philip the Fourth sends to

the Monastery of San Lorenzo, the Royal Escorial, this year M.D.C.L.V.I. Described and arranged by Diego de Silva Velazquez." In this Catalogue we find the following note :

" Charles Stuart, King of England, worthy of better fortune for the excellent parts with which nature gifted him, with laudable and generous ambition to embellish his palace and enrich his Kingdom, with the most noble, precious and exquisite that might be found in foreign lands, scattered through them persons of gentle mind, taste, intelligence and information. They traversed Europe and, supplementing with their diligence the gold that the King freely provided, were fortunate in acquiring much of the best that interested them."

The Memorial goes on to say that " At the tragic death of Charles, the care and labour of so many men fell to the ground in a day," the collection being sold by the Republicans. Philip IV bought many masterpieces from this collection.

Philip V was a great collector. He added many works of the French Schools, especially those of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries ; his wife, Isabel Farnese, admired and collected the pictures of Murillo. The King and Queen also purchased the important collection of Queen Christina of Sweden which was sold in Rome, and which they acquired through the agency of Cardinal Acquaviva.

Charles III ordered all the works of art dispersed about in the Royal palaces to be collected together in the new palace that was just completed. They came—I quote from Señor de Beruete's *Goya, pintor*

*de Retratos*—from the “Buen Retiro, San Lorenzo del Escorial, San Ildefonso, Aranjuez, la Casa de Campo, la Quinta del Duque de Arco, la Torre de la Parada, la Casa Palacio de las Batuecas, el Castillo de Vinuelas and la Zarzuela.”

The royal collections were now concentrated between the new palace and the Academy of San Fernando, instituted in 1752. In 1785, Charles III began the building of the Prado Museum, which was placed close by the Botanical Gardens and which was intended for a Museum of Natural History and Science. The architect was a Spaniard, Juan de Villanueva, who had studied in Italy; he was not destined to finish his work, which was interrupted by the French invasion, when the Museum was gutted. It was only restored and finished after the restoration of the Bourbons in 1814. The idea of utilizing this building as a national picture gallery originated with the second wife of Ferdinand VII, Isabel de Braganza. The great work began modestly. Three rooms were hung with three hundred and eleven pictures by Spanish artists, to which were added one hundred and ninety-five Italian works, new rooms being opened as they were required. In 1840, all the most important works in the royal collections were placed in the Prado, as well as nearly two thousand pictures from the National Museum of the Convent of La Trinidad, taken from suppressed convents in 1836. In 1898 the Museum, which was badly lighted and, in many ways, unsuited to the requirements of a picture gallery, was considerably improved under the direction of

Fernando Arbós and, in 1899, the masterpieces of Velazquez were collected together in the Oval room. Although improved, the galleries were still quite unworthy, in many cases, of the treasures that they contained, and it has been left for the present generation to see the final arrangement and extension of the Museum. These operations are due to the initiative of a Board that was appointed in 1912, to look into and control the management of the gallery. The Duke of Alba undertook the office of Chairman, and amongst the influential Committee was D. Aureliano de Beruete y Moret, who became Director of the Museum in 1919. Señor de Beruete, son of the famous Art Critic, and himself a distinguished writer and critic, being fully in sympathy with the aspirations of his Committee, has supervised the alterations with enthusiasm. During a third stay in Madrid, in the winter of 1921, I had the privilege of seeing the new galleries under his guidance; they were completed, but not, in most cases, decorated.

Señor de Beruete pointed out that in Spain, where the light is intense for the greater part of the year, the difficulties connected with lighting were great. Good lighting, is, of course, essential, but too much is dangerous. Again, the climate of Madrid, which is very dry and has extremes of heat and cold, has an injurious effect on pictures painted in panel. Heat causes the wood to expand, cold has the contrary effect, and the result is that the surface cracks. All these difficulties seem to have been overcome in the new galleries.

The Museum consists of a building in the shape of an oblong cube, with a central room that projects from the long gallery that runs from end to end. Parallel with this long gallery another has been erected, containing ten new rooms on the ground floor and twelve on the first floor, where the principal pictures are housed. These rooms are very lofty, admirably lighted and decorated, as each one is finished, to suit the pictures that are to be hung on the walls.

It is obvious that the addition of twenty-two new rooms entails the re-arrangement of the pictures.

Those who know the Prado will remember that in the ante-room of the long gallery are some works by Goya ; beyond that are the Venetian and Flemish Schools ; at the end of the gallery are the rooms devoted to Murillo, Ribera and the Dutch School. In the centre is the Oval room given up to Velazquez. In the new arrangement the long gallery will be hung with works of the Spanish Schools, beginning with the Primitives ; to the left, in one of the new rooms already opened, we find El Greco ; beyond that, two new rooms will be dedicated to Velazquez, one of which will contain his religious works. Beyond these will come the Venetian and Flemish Schools, now hung in the long gallery. On the ground floor the sculpture will still occupy the Oval room, from which the disfiguring partition wall will be removed, but there will be considerable alterations as regards the pictures. One of the new rooms on the ground floor, which has very thick walls, is destined for the pictures on panel ; it has been so heated that it is

hoped to keep an even temperature summer and winter alike. Two rooms on this floor are already hung with works of the French School.

I cannot remember the name of the writer who said that he entered the Prado running, wondering what he had done to deserve so great a joy ; what would he have said to us, delaying on the threshold to discuss the arrangement of the treasures that we might otherwise catalogue ? To do so, however, would be not only outside the scope of this book, but outside the power of the writer. All we can do is to enter the Museum in order to discuss, not questions arising from the higher criticism, but those that touch on the mentality of the Spaniard and the progress of Art in the capital. Perhaps the best way of doing this would be to take a glance at the work of the three men who have influenced the art of the country most profoundly—El Greco, Velazquez and Goya.

## CHAPTER XII

### EL GRECO AND VELAZQUEZ

THE Prado Museum, like so many other buildings in Madrid, stands on the slope of a hill. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that, while the entrance in the centre of the façade fronting the Paseo admits us to the ground floor galleries, the entrance in the Calle de Felipe IV, at the side of the Museum, approaches the upper and principal floor by a bold flight of steps. At the foot of these steps is a bronze statue of a little, old man—Francisco Goya—some of whose masterpieces are hung in the ante-room of the long gallery.

It is unwise to linger long in this gallery if we desire to study the austere paintings of El Greco. As it was arranged when last I had the joy of seeing it, the glowing Titians led on to the flaming works of Rubens, and beyond were the rooms containing the gracious Madonnas of Murillo and the violent and tragic compositions of Ribera. Although the gallery may be now hung with the works of the Spanish School, and so less disturbing to the mind intent on studying the development of a certain national tendency, it is best to discard, for the time being, what cannot be assimilated, and to turn into a room



DETAIL FROM THE BURIAL OF THE CONDE DE ORGAZ. EL GRECO



to the left as you enter the gallery, which is devoted to the works of El Greco.

This room is in the new building and was the first to be opened. It is a small room, though lofty ; the walls are distempered in grey, which makes an excellent background to the pictures. There is a peculiar atmosphere about this room, something archaic, something strongly spiritual, that must strike the most unobservant. The pictures comprise religious compositions of various periods of the artist's career, and a series of portraits hang in a long line on a background of crimson damask. Before considering them, let us briefly run over the principal events in the life of the artist.

To those who believe in Fate, the history of El Greco is very significant. Domenico Theotocúpoli was born in Crete, probably about 1547 ; he went to Italy to study painting, and to Spain, apparently to seek his fortune. In Venice he entered the studio of Titian, but afterwards went to Rome to work under Giulio Clovio. It is considered probable that he went to Spain hoping to be employed by Philip II, who had collected a number of artists to decorate the Escorial ; it has also been suggested that he might have received a commission from the Chapter of the Convent of San Domingo el Antiguo in Toledo, to paint the eight altar-pieces that he afterwards executed. Whatever the motive, there must have been some underlying, subconscious influence that led him to the land that was to call forth the expression of his peculiar genius. For Domenico, or "the Greek" as he was called in the country of his

adoption, not only painted in Spain, he absorbed Spain and became the father of her national school.

Philip II did not give El Greco the coveted commission, so he turned his back on Madrid and went to Toledo, then a great centre of art. Here he found Berruguete and Sansovino, and here came Cervantes and Lope de Vega and many another artist and writer of that date. Although there were good architects and fine sculptors, there were no first-rate painters in Toledo, and it was not long before the Cretan artist made his mark. His talent was recognized in this city long before he, at last, received an order from Philip, and here many of his finest works were executed, including the famous "Burial of the Count of Orgaz." Of his private life nothing is known, not even the name or nationality of his wife, who is presumed to have been a Toledan. He had one son, Jorge Manuel, who may have executed the copy of a portion of the "Burial of the Conde de Orgaz" which hangs, justly skied, in the Gallery. Legendary reports there are of a life of luxury in Toledo, the life of a great artist of the Renaissance, with what truth we cannot say. All that concerns us is the fact that this very original painter adopted a cold scheme of colour; when nearly all artists used the warm tints he used carmine and blue, giving to his compositions and his portraits certain ashen grey tones that were in due time handed down through Velazquez and Goya to modern art. As to his drawing, it is sometimes absolutely accurate as in the series of por-

traits that we see in this room ; it is sometimes—more especially as he grew older—perhaps purposely, inaccurate. If you study the compositions on the walls you cannot fail to be struck by the strange elongated figures with small heads and long Byzantine faces ; the long thin legs with bulging calves are sometimes grotesque. But look at the faces ! Here we have the transcendental, the spiritual, the soul of things, and in the composition there is often a pyramidal form, as of flames rising upward ; it is a type of composition that might have inspired Blake centuries afterwards.

El Greco is the painter of the soul and of the ego, as expressed in his religious pictures and in his portraits. Take the portraits hanging over there, seven sombre canvases seen against the crimson damask screen ; they represent seven men with dark eyes and hair, with small pointed beards, dressed in black, relieved by a white ruff. So similar are they in composition, colour and even, superficially, in type, that it is amazing to see that each has a distinctive character of its own. The flesh is hardly flesh, the tones are so grey ; the beautifully drawn hand of No. 809 is grey too. And, talking of hands, Señor Cossio, the biographer of El Greco, notes that the middle and third fingers are so constantly drawn together that it becomes almost as good as a signature. Passing round the room we cannot fail to remark the wonderful expression on the face of the Christ and the pensive Virgin, so homely when contrasted with the lovely young Madonnas of the time, and with the spiritual

signification of the compositions which culminate in flames and clouds.

El Greco can best be studied in Toledo, where he accomplished his best work and where he died in 1614, two years before the death of Cervantes. There are also a good many of his works in Madrid, notably in the collection of Señor de Beruete. Before leaving this room it will be well to read over the eloquent words of Cossio which resume, in so masterly a way, the idiosyncrasies of the most individual of painters and his place in Spanish art :

“ Crete was his birthplace ; of his private life we know nothing. He is the essence of unfettered individuality ; extravagant and revolutionary in his ideas. From his race he derived a delicacy and instability of mind which, perhaps, were due also to the original fount of Hellenic culture ; from his stored-up artistic inheritance he took that Greco-Alexandrine atmosphere that is always noticeable in his compositions and a Byzantine delight in repetition of form ; from Italy and the sixteenth century the grandeur of conception, the sparks of universal knowledge and the heroic gift of idealization which he possessed. El Greco is the last epigone of the Renaissance.

“ Venice educates him in art, Titian teaches him technique, Tintoretto converts him to the dramatic presentment of backgrounds and figures, to tonalities of carmine and silver ; Michael Angelo braces him and embitters him, he excites him and makes him concentrate his will ; above all he virilizes his style. The sombre and arid Castile is kind to him

because she sets him free. Left alone in Castile, with rules forgotten and teachings of masters abandoned, he finds himself. He becomes intimate with the spirit and character of the country, losing himself in them and allowing himself to be dominated by them, and he finds at last the genius of the Spanish country and the Spanish soul. He reproduces faithfully in his works all that which vibrated in unison with his own singular temperament : violence, dignity, exaltation, sadness, mysticism, intimate realism—a medley of crimson and ashen grey—and after sketching in with rapid inspired outline he succeeds in producing original and lasting work ; he discovers a line of country which he can call his own. And up that track he follows, tormented by lightning flashes of inspiration about those problems of light and colour which are still the problems of to-day, by increasingly delirious exaltation as to composition and figures, light and colour, by the burning desire of the fervent pioneer to avoid alike triviality and stagnation. His art was incorrect, unbalanced, but never weak or slight ; he missed fire sometimes, hit the mark at others, as all are apt to do who seek to explore new ground. He declared that painting was not an art, that is to say an affair of rules and canons, but an intensely personal work of inspiration. He deprecates Michael Angelo, to whom, nevertheless, he is united by the perennial discontent and by the restlessness of mind which prompted him also to seek out new difficulties. He was an idealist and a realist ; clear and lucid at one time, like Don

Quixote, at other times epigrammatic and obscure like Persiles, he painted the human better than the divine and always subjects the divine to the human. He is freer, more modern, more positive as he grows older and is a rebel up to the last moment of his life. Such was El Greco."

El Greco enjoyed a great reputation in his day, but his fame died with him and there appeared nobody to carry on his school. It was left to Velazquez to discover the great artist during one of his visits to Toledo. Velazquez seems to have recognized the genius of this strange artist at once. He studied his works carefully, and Palomino tells us that he copied the technique of the portraits which he said could never be sufficiently appreciated. After his death some of the works of El Greco were found in the rooms in the palace that he had occupied.

And so we find the first link in the chain that binds these three great artists together, so dissimilar in the expression of their genius, but alike in this, that while all were unable to copy, each was anxious to study and to assimilate any points of technique that opened the way to a new horizon.

Most people feel some sort of emotion on entering the Velazquez room for the first time. "Je voudrais avaler Vélasquez tout entier!" wrote Henri Regnault in 1868. "C'est le premier peintre du monde." "Art," said Whistler, "dipped the Spaniard's brush in light and air and made his people live within their frames and stand upon their legs, that all nobility and sweetness and tenderness

and magnificence should be theirs by right." Bonnat wrote of his technique: "He paints his composition directly on the canvas. The simplified shadows are simply rubbed in, all the high lights are laid on in a rich impasto; and the result, with its broad, delicate and justly executed tonalities, is so perfect in value that the illusion is complete." Elsewhere he speaks of "looking at reality through an open window."

Quotations might be multiplied, for many of the most famous art critics, English and foreign, have written about Velazquez. Let us take a glance round the Oval room, as it was when last I saw it in 1921.

A large, bare, oddly shaped room is before us; the walls are distempered with a peculiarly unpleasant shade of brick-dust red, and on them are hung the masterpieces that we have come to see. Dark and sober in colour, perfect in tone, simple in composition and apparently simple in technique, they have all the subtlety in the world when you come to look into them closely. The change from the El Greco room is striking. We are worlds away from the mystic austerity of the Cretan, we are in the presence of a great realist, of a painter who saw nature with his own eyes. Velazquez had studied El Greco's portraits from the technical standpoint, and we find the ashen grey of the earlier artist transformed by the alchemy of the later to a pearly silver.

The history of Velazquez is so well known that we will not touch on more than the barest outline.

Diego de Silva Velazquez was born in Seville in 1599 ; his parents were of that rather indefinite class, the hijosdalgos. He was destined for the army or the law, but his early desire to study painting resulted in his being placed in the studio of Herrera. Unable to bear the harsh temper of the artist—which was notorious—he begged his father to let him study in the newly opened studio of Pacheco. He was only twelve years old when his parents apprenticed him to this new master ; in the document that is quoted by D. N. Sentenach in his *School of Seville* it is expressly said that the boy is to serve in the house, to obey in everything, and that his parents have no more control over him for the six years of his apprenticeship. In return for that Pacheco was to teach him his art “ without concealing anything ” and to supply him with “ food and drink, clothes and shoes, a house and a bed in which to sleep, be he well or ill . . . giving him during the said time, a coat, breeches, a doublet and a short cloak, stockings and shoes, two shirts, a jacket and a hat.”

Velazquez spent five years with Pacheco, kept sternly to classical studies that did not appeal to him, painting still life from Nature to satisfy himself, and keeping to those principles that had been instilled into him by the termagant Herrera. Then he married his master’s daughter, went to Madrid, was protected by the Conde Duque, attracted attention by the portrait of a Court official and was appointed Court Painter when he was just twenty-four years of age. From that time on his life was marked by one continual series of successes.

The Kings of Spain had been very well served by their Court painters. Charles v appointed, as his official painter in Flanders, that fine portrait painter, Antonio Moro, who was afterwards employed at the Courts of Charles and Philip in Madrid. After his departure, his pupil, Alonso Sanchez Coello, took his place and he, in his turn, was succeeded by Juan Pantoja de la Cruz and Bartolomé Gonzalez. When Velazquez came into office there was no Spanish School. The painters, with the exception of Herrera, who was feeling his way to realism and who, through his pupil, was to have a hand in founding the new school, were either followers of those of Flanders or of Italy. Velazquez took his inspiration, apart from the study of life, from Herrera, the rebel against classicism, and El Greco, the alien artist who most faithfully represented Spanish mentality. His own balance, his long years of study, much of which was against the collar, his unerring judgment, all combined to give to his work that quality of simple grandeur that makes for permanence, that is creating for all time. What do we know of the character or tastes of Velazquez? Hardly anything; not more than we know of those of Shakespeare. He was before all things a craftsman, one who was intent on reproducing the external appearance and the inner significance of his sitter. Unlike so many of the modern painters, he did not crave to distort Nature in order to express his own peculiar mentality; perhaps that is the reason why so many come to worship at his shrine. As Whistler says somewhere: "The

Infantas clad in inæsthetic hoops are, as works of art, of the same quality as the Elgin Marbles."

In the Velazquez room can be studied the works of the master from the earliest portrait of Philip IV, painted in 1523, or the earlier Adoration of the Magi, painted in 1519, to those works of his maturity, the wonderful "Christ Crucified," the series of portraits of the notabilities of the day and the great canvases of "The Surrender of Breda," "The Spinners" and "The Maids of Honour." As we cannot speak of the technique of the pictures, let us take a look at the people.

"The Surrender of Breda" is remarkable, apart from its fine and uncommon composition, which may or may not have been original, for the portrait of the victor. Velazquez travelled out to Italy in his suite, and the head, which was painted from memory, is extremely characteristic. "The Spinners" is notable as having been painted in the factory in the Calle de Santa Isabel, an innovation at a period when all such pictures were executed in the studio. Ribera, whose work Velazquez admired, would have painted it in a cellar with a hole in the roof to let a strong artificial light on to some figure or group; Velazquez painted the light exactly as it was. The Maids of Honour represented in the celebrated picture are engaged in trying to persuade the little Infanta Margarita to stand for her portrait. It is a picture of intimate family life. We see Velazquez at his easel, the Infanta turning away from him with a half-roguish expression on her face, as if she were trying to be



MISS MARGARET MURRAY, 1911.



naughty ; the reflection of the heads of Philip IV and his second wife, Mariana, who appear to be watching the scene, are shown in a glass at the back of the room, and there are also the attendant courtiers and dwarfs. We even know the names of the latter. The Maids are Agustina Sarmiento and Isabel de Velasco ; the female deformity is Mari Bárbara, the male Nicolasio Pertusato, strange playmates, both of them, for the dainty, wilful little Infanta. There is a portrait of Margarita at the age of ten that is a marvel of silver and rose, and a stately presentment of her mother Mariana, with her pinched and somewhat discontented face framed in a wonderful erection of hair ornamented with ribbons. Close by is the Infanta Maria, once the betrothed of the Prince of Wales, she who became Empress and died in the odour of sanctity in the convent of the Descalzas Reales in Madrid. She has the Austrian lip, and her fair hair is tightly curled ; speaking dispassionately, she does not give the impression of that beauty for which she was famed. Velazquez went to Naples, during his stay in Italy, on purpose to paint her portrait for her brother.

For the most part the portraits represent men ; perhaps, as Sir William Stirling Maxwell suggests, the ladies of that date lived in great seclusion, attended by their duennas and their dwarfs, and so did not court publicity. Certain it is that Velazquez had more men for his sitters than women. In the Oval room, besides those just mentioned, we have only a rather forbidding-looking dame, seen in profile,

who is reputed to be Juana Pacheco, his wife, and the full-length portrait of Doña Antonia Ipenarrieta y Galdos, not one of the finest specimens of his art. Of the men we have, of course, the King Philip IV, with his mask-like face, whom we see as a youth, as a mature man and in a marvellous apotheosis seated on a prancing horse. Other equestrian portraits represent the Conde Duque de Olivares attired in the panoply of war—he who never went to battle—and the engaging little Prince Baltasar Carlos, whose premature death was a national disaster. Son of Isabel de Bourbon and grandson of Henri IV of France, the boy was a sturdy little fellow, astride on his fat and prancing pony, when the portrait was painted. He is dressed in a green coat, with a rose scarf floating behind him ; his legs, encased in leather gaiters, only reach half-way down the tubby body of his mount. Behind him is the rolling plain and the sharp silhouette of the Sierra, with the Pardo in the middle distance. Other portraits there are, including the two brothers of Philip, a magnificent presentment of the sculptor, Martinez Montañés, the dwarfs, painted at the height of his achievement, two characteristic studies of Spanish beggars, labelled as *Æneas* and *Menippus*, and a study of his own head, dark and intent, looking down on the legacy that he left to posterity.

Velazquez died in 1660, aged sixty-one, worn out and overtired by those Court functions that could so easily have been performed by another. We cannot but regret the fact, although it seems

somehow fitting that so great an artist should have died while his talent was untouched by age.

As we leave the gallery, we carry away with us unforgettable impressions. Perhaps one of the strongest is that of the force of the man. Endowed with intuition rather than with imagination, it was fortunate that his business lay so much with the representation of mankind, fortunate, also, that he saw so clearly the way he meant to take, never turning aside from his goal. His two journeys to Italy may have developed his technique, they certainly did not alter his ideal ; his friendship with Rubens, at the height of his reputation, had apparently no effect on his art. His figure stands alone and apart in his own generation, and he left no disciples.

## CHAPTER XIII

### FRANCISCO GOYA

THE works of Velazquez, so famous during his lifetime, were forgotten after he died, and it was not until 1778, one hundred and eighteen years after his death, that they came to light again. For over a century they had hung in the various palaces belonging to the Kings of Spain, unnoticed and uncared for, as of works of art belonging to a day that was done, simply memorials of the Planet King and his Court. But a new era was dawning for Spain with the Bourbon Kings, who were, though in a different way, as interested in art as had been Charles v and the two Philips. Charles III had a French love of order, and a French desire to centralize and to classify the interests and the possessions of the Crown, and it was by his order that all the pictures were brought to the new palace. Here it was that Goya saw the Titians and the Rembrandts, the Moros and the Van Dycks, the flaming works of Rubens, the sober Dutch School, the decorative Italian School, the masterpieces of times past and the collection of French pictures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that had been bought

by the Bourbons. Amongst them all he found Velazquez.

Francisco Goya was born at Fuendetodos, in Aragon, in the year 1746 ; his father was a peasant, his mother of a rather superior class. He studied painting in Zaragoza and, after painting some religious pictures there, went to Madrid and on to Italy. It was after his return to Madrid, when he was already on the road to success, that he came across the pictures displayed in the palace. Amongst them all he at once singled out the portraits of Velazquez ; and here we have the second link in the chain.

I like to think of Goya, who to the end of his life was an explorer and a learner, coming suddenly on these sombre canvases, feeling within him some sort of thrill as of one who had found the inspiration that he needed. He had already taken his colour scheme from El Greco and now he had found a style of art that appealed to him because, apart from its excellence, it struck him as being typically Spanish, as offering him a tradition that he could carry on. Full of this new discovery, he set to work to etch copies of some of the pictures, accomplishing his task in a way that strikes the spectator as being distinctly comic. We see the fierce Conde Duque become suddenly as mild as a lamb, and in none of the etchings does he manage to achieve accuracy. But that did not really matter. Goya was no copyist ; no doubt he learned all that he wanted while making his studies, although these had no value as such. He was thirty-two years

old in 1778 and was already married to the sister of Francisco Bayeu, the painter ; he had executed some works at Zaragoza and was then employed by the all-powerful Mengs at the Royal Tapestry works where he painted, between 1776 and 1791, forty-five pictures to be reproduced by the weavers. It was not until five years after this date that he began his great career as a portrait painter. In 1783 Goya was successful in obtaining a commission to paint a picture for one of the chapels of the new Church of San Francisco el Grande, and in this year he painted his first important portrait, that of the Conde de Floridablanca. In 1786 he was appointed Court painter to King Charles IV.

Since Velazquez had received the same appointment in 1523 much water had flowed under the bridge. After the death of Philip IV and of his son Charles II, who left no heir, the crown devolved upon Philip of Anjou, the grandson of Louis XIV of France and of his second wife, Maria Teresa, sister of Philip IV of Spain. Philip V was essentially French in his tastes ; he built the palace of La Granja and rebuilt that of Aranjuez in the style of Louis XIV ; and he encouraged art, giving the preference to the French School. He was followed by Charles III, an admirable ruler, who did so much to improve Madrid and who founded the National Library. Charles IV had none of the talent of his predecessor ; he was ruled by the strong-minded Queen, Maria Luisa of Parma, and by the upstart, Godoy, who, by the way, was a good friend to Goya. As to the state of art, it was distinctly decadent.

The moving spirit was Raphael Mengs, who advocated a theatrical form of classicism that he had learned in Italy; it had no roots in the national life, no tradition that Goya was ready to accept. Abroad a new spirit was already spreading a different sort of classicism, purer and more austere, that was to culminate in the works of David and his school in the days of the Empire. This movement was set going by the discoveries of antiques in Pompeii and Herculaneum in 1755 and popularized by Winckelmann's *History of Art among the Ancients*, which was soon in every studio and in the hands of every dilettante. In France, where Boucher was dead and Fragonard was to linger on to 1806, seeing himself superseded by men of lesser talent, the decorative paintings, with the Loves and the Cupids, the garlands of roses and the joyous blue skies, were fast receding before the storm clouds of the Revolution.

It is interesting to note that in England, where Flaxman and his school upheld the classical style, the great series of portrait painters continued to develop on typically national lines. If classical draperies were adopted, or a pretty woman were painted as Circe, the grace and warmth of the national school of painting was not altered to suit the cold and stiff formalism that characterized so much work of that school which received its hallmark from David's first great success in 1784. In 1783, when Goya was appointed Court painter, Reynolds and Romney were painting, and Gainsborough, to whose work his own has been compared;

had only five more years to live. It is probable that Goya had seen engravings after this great artist, but it seems unlikely that he had ever come across the originals. It is a pity that there should be no first-rate pictures by the English artists in the Prado, where interesting comparisons could have been made, and one can but regret that, out of the number of masterpieces that pass over the Atlantic to the States, one or two could not find their way to the Spanish Capital to take their place among the works of all the other Schools of Europe.

Don A. de Beruete, the Director of the Prado, has written the most complete and informing life of Goya. It is divided into three volumes treating separately his work as a portrait painter, as a designer and as a draughtsman and engraver. In this interesting book Señor de Beruete points out that, in considering the art of this painter, you must also consider his life. Without remembering that he passed through different phases of life, it is hard to realize the different phases of his art. He experienced years of peace when he was busily employed in painting the portraits of the Sovereigns and their Court, he was in Madrid during the French invasion and saw the Mamelukes charge up the Alcalá from his balcony in the Puerta del Sol, he suffered the humiliation of being in a conquered country, and he died in exile. "Considering Goya's work as a whole," Señor de Beruete writes, "I must insist that it contains two manifestations, each obeying a creative spirit of a different order and a different mentality; one of these can be identified

with the spirit of the eighteenth century, pleasant, amiable and suggestive ; the other, more intense and complex, more individual, is in sympathy with that of the nineteenth century." Following up this theory we are led to see that there are two Goyas, the Goya of the eighteenth and the Goya of the nineteenth century. The more we study the question, the more we shall see the truth of the statement. There is a strong dividing line between one and the other.

If the Prado is not so rich in the masterpieces of Goya as we could wish, it is certainly the best place to gain a comprehensive idea of his whole output and especially of the phases through which he passed. In order to do this we must, if the pictures are still arranged as they were in 1921, go down to the ground floor to see the designs for tapestry, return to the ante-room of the long gallery and to other galleries on that floor to study the works of his maturity, and down again to the basement to see the drawings, the engravings, the awesome "Caprichos" and those oil-paintings with which he decorated his own house.

Taking the designs for tapestries first, we have charming pictures, evidently influenced by the decorative French School, though so entirely original in treatment of the subject. In these canvases, so well known through reproductions, are depicted scenes of town and rustic life. It is easy to see the realist peeping through the decorator. The party of young people, dressed up as majos and majas, playing at blindman's buff on the shores of the Manzanares, are all portraits ; the scenes repre-

sented in all the designs are those that he had actually seen and observed. The women who are tossing the peléle or straw-man in the air are types of those whom he must often have seen in carnival time, and the *maja*—untranslatable word—is just the realization of a national type. Where Boucher would have painted Venus and Adonis, Goya gives us the *majo* and *maja*.

The *maja* appears to have been a sort of Spanish soubrette, who dressed to attract admiration ; the *majo* was a gallant who affected a dress that resembled that of a bullfighter. Both were playing their part in the life of gallantry of the day. In time it became the fashion among the upper classes to dress up in these costumes, in spite of the protests of the law. Doña Blanca de los Ríos de Lamperez, in her *Madrid Goyesco*, defines the *maja* as the Spanish Venus, the emblem of the race, the mother of a new art, created by Goya, who made out of those of his day the *maja* for all time. Goya, she tells us, " painted the nation from within and from without, painted our dynamic truculence in feasts, quarrels, highway robberies, bullfights, misfortunes and shootings ; plumbed the depths of our inner life, so superstitious and startling, the shadowy region of visions, nightmares, spectres and witches' Sabbaths, the whole tragi-comedy of waking and sleeping, of action and conscience. And all this life, so universal, so human, is Spanish life, the life of Madrid to the marrow."

These words surely throw a sudden light on the character of Goya. We have seen that his art was

transformed as his experiences deepened, but it seems probable that, within the idiosyncrasies of the eighteenth-century artist, there lurked the sardonic humour of the nineteenth-century satirist. The events of his life merely brought out some underlying strain in his mentality, which would probably have lain dormant had he continued to paint the statesmen and soldiers, the funny little children and the pretty ladies of the Court of Charles IV.

We know nothing of El Greco, the mystic, or of Velazquez, the craftsman, but we can get an insight into the life and disposition of Goya. From his own portraits of himself we know exactly what he was like. His ugly face, with snub nose, observant eyes and pouting lips, is familiar to all ; the fine head imposes itself on the memory. The most sympathetic of the portraits is certainly the head in the Academy of San Fernando, signed and dated, 1815. In the face is expressed a medley of sadness and sweetness, of acute observation and the unmistakable stamp of genius. It is the face of a man who has suffered many things and who has become completely disillusioned. But, above all, the intent look in the eyes suggests that tenacity of purpose and that devotion to an ideal that made him work at his art up to the end of his long life.

As to his character, we know that he was hard-working, open-minded, ambitious ; he had bad health, especially after a serious illness in 1792, that left him stone-deaf, and which may also have accounted for a difficult temper and fits of pessimism. He had good friends, amongst whom we can think of

two very different individuals—the learned Moratín, faithful companion up to the time of his death, and the beautiful Duchess of Alba, who died young in 1802. About this latter friendship, scandal has wagged her tongue, suggesting that Goya was her lover, and that they actually ran away once and were recalled to their duty by the Queen herself. All the pretty ladies dressed as *majas* are supposed to represent the Duchess, not excepting the famous pair, the “*Maja vestida*” and the “*Maja desnuda*.” But Señor de Beruete refutes these theories which have, in fact, no basis in historical records ; he maintains that the affair is, to say the least of it, unlikely. Goya was not only much older than the Duchess, he was ill, sharp-tempered and stone-deaf. Moreover, he lived in apparent harmony with his wife, by whom he had twenty children, only one of whom survived him. This argument seems conclusive.

The Duchess was a great character. Good-looking, wilful, very modern and independent in her views and in her mode of life, she was the talk of the town. Goya certainly admired her very much ; he painted her several times, and in two of these portraits her hand points to the painter’s signature at her feet.

Besides painting portraits, Goya took a great interest in popular life and popular amusements. He painted “*The Feast of Saint Isidore*,” the decorative pictures for Godoy, now in the library of the Ministry of Marine, the popular and amusing “*Burial of the Sardine*,” many sketches and some pictures of the bullring, which he frequented, and portraits of celebrated bullfighters. Of religious

pictures the only important ones are those in the Church of San Antonio de la Florida, where he decorated the cupola and ceiling and the lunettes over the windows. These decorative designs are distinctly secular in character. The impression left on the mind is of figures seen in strong foreshortening, of charming angels dressed in ball-gowns, of Cupids flying joyfully, of motion and light. Señor de Beruete has an interesting theory concerning the medium used, or rather the tools used to lay on the medium, being of opinion that certain smooth sponges ordered for the work were employed instead of brushes in the large spaces.

After the crash came Goya's life was very different and very difficult. Charles IV had fled, the Court was no more, the country was under foreign domination. He returned to Madrid, it is true, and even worked a little for the Rey Plazuelo, but his whole outlook was changed. He painted, either then or afterwards, the pictures of war, or rather those representing armed men shooting down unarmed civilians. There is none of the epic character about these works, none of the nobility that takes away from the horrors of war. He shows relentless force mowing down unwilling victims. The drawing is slack, the composition is purposely unlovely. And then that undercurrent of sarcasm that was always there came to the surface along with a sort of delight in the underworld of demons and ghouls. He plunged into the region of "visions, nightmares, spectres and witches' Sabbaths"; and all these weird and curious imaginings he visualized and

reproduced in his work. Between 1810 and 1820 he produced the series of engravings that are now in the Prado ; the "Caprices," the "Disasters of War," the "Disparates" and the "Tauromachia," as well as the caricatures and the awesome oil panels with which he adorned his own house.

After the restoration of Ferdinand VI, son of Charles IV, Goya was once more Court painter, but he was not in favour. Ferdinand preferred to sweep away those who had served his parents and, though he nominally retained Goya, his position was no longer the same. The painter lived now in a small house on the farther bank of the Manzanares. It was placed high up and had a fine view of the town ; the people called it familiarly "La Quinta del Sordo." In this house, which has since been pulled down, Goya painted those dark and dismal compositions which he must have executed with his tongue in his cheek. Compare them with the tapestry designs or the portraits of his earlier days, you will find them as different as night from day. The sardonic touch of painting Saturn devouring his children and hanging the picture in the dining-room is typical of the post-war humour of the man ; in the same room was a sinister looking female who might have come direct from the tumbrels of the French Revolution. Other panels represented weird subjects, hastily executed, with nothing but a sort of ruthless force to redeem them, an absolute disregard for convention, an extraordinary power of representing things that are almost unpaintable. Well might he sketch himself with his face hidden and

surrounded by bat-like creatures, with this legend attached : "The dream of reason produces monsters."

In 1824 Goya obtained leave to go to France, pleading his ill-health. He found life in Bordeaux, where there was quite a Spanish colony, and where he was reunited to his old friend Moratín, very much to his taste. He returned to Madrid, but only for a time, and he died at Bordeaux in 1828. Up to the end he kept his interest in his profession, his last portrait being executed at the advanced age of eighty-one, just a year before his death.

In the Prado Museum we can see many of his famous works, including the engravings and the lithographs, an art that he learned at the age of seventy-three, and in which he attained proficiency with his usual ease. The pictures include the "Maja vestida" and "Maja desunda," to which allusion has been made ; the equestrian portrait of Queen Maria Luisa, the portrait of Moratín, and the great picture in which the family of Charles IV is represented. It is interesting to note that Fortún, whose works can be seen among those collected by the late D. Pablo Bosch, was so much impressed by this picture that he copied it instead of one of the masterpieces of Velazquez, which he had come to the gallery in order to study.

## CHAPTER XIV

### WALKS ABOUT MADRID

ONE of the drawbacks to life in Madrid is the difficulty of getting about. The economical stranger who has no car, and who finds it expensive to hire one and tiresome to walk to either of the stands where they are drawn up, falls back on the pesetero. Larra describes a drive in one of these vehicles, so called because you pay the fare in pesetas. He says that it progressed so slowly that he was always putting out his head to see if it had started and that, when he at last arrived at his destination, he was in doubt whether the cab had gone to the house or the house had come to the cab. The trams are very convenient, but only take you a part of the way and are often very crowded. So it is simplest to walk.

My wanderings on foot taught me a great deal about Madrid. Not only did I learn much about all sorts of out-of-the-way streets, but, as I have a perfect genius for taking the wrong turning and forgetting all the information gleaned from the guide-book before starting, I frequently saw things that I should otherwise have passed by unnoticed.

To enumerate all the walks that might be taken

would be tedious and might even require a book to itself. You can walk down to the Manzanares—about which so many jokes have been made—remembering that it inspired Théophile Gautier, who could not understand the Spaniards' water-drinking proclivities, to write : “ *Je voudrais bien voir la figure que ferait tout autre fleuve dans une ville devorée d'une pareille soif !* ” You can walk about in the various Parks or public Gardens when the season tempts you to loiter, but in winter there are few such days, though the Retiro has its charm at all times of the year. In this Park, with its converging avenues and its beds of violets under the trees, with its statues and its broad road where people drive in the evenings, there is now no spirit of the past. We have, instead, a pompous monument to Alfonso XII, which looks down on the lake where once the comedies of Lope de Vega and Calderón were acted on a floating stage ; we have a crystal palace, where exhibitions are held from time to time, and a Zoological Gardens which I confess I did not visit. There is also the ruin of the chapel of San Pelayo de Ávila, said to be fourteenth-century Romanesque, but restored in 1896.

No visitor to Madrid should fail to visit the royal stables, coach-houses and the gallery containing saddlery and harness. The fine stud of horses is well worth seeing, the stables are models ; in the coach-houses you can see state coaches of various periods, from the funereal black coach of Juana la Loca, with its black velvet lining, to the gaily decorated state coach in which the present King

and Queen returned from their wedding, which still bears the marks of the attack that so nearly cost them their lives. As to the harness gallery, it is a regular museum. All sorts of harness, saddles and trappings are exhibited here. The harness of state, of the Cavalry regiments of all countries, Moorish harness, Mediæval trappings, modern saddles, eighteenth-century sedan-chairs, gorgeous Moorish embroidered saddle-cloths, all these and many more exhibits of great interest are to be seen here. A special order is, of course, necessary.

The palace of the Duke of Alba is one of the few private collections to which strangers are readily admitted with a suitable recommendation. The palace itself is remarkably fine and stands well in a terraced garden ; the contents are specially interesting to British pilgrims because of the descent of that family from the Duke of Berwick, a natural son of James II and Arabella Churchill, sister of the first Duke of Marlborough. James Fitz-James distinguished himself in foreign wars, was naturalized in France and became Marshal of France, fought for Spain and was created Duke of Liria and Xerica by Philip V, and a Knight of the Golden Fleece. The Duke died a soldier's death at the siege of Philipsburg, fighting against Prince Eugene ; he left a son by his first wife, the widow of Patrick, Earl of Lucan. This marriage had been a love match and it came to an abrupt conclusion, after only one year's happiness, when the Duchess died of consumption at Pontoise. She was not yet twenty-three years old and Saint-Simon tells us

that she died "in the flower of her age, beautiful, pathetic, a subject for a painter, a nymph." From this marriage came the line of which the present Duke of Alba is the representative, the family of Stuart Fitz-James becoming merged in that of Alba after the marriage between the third Duke of Berwick and Maria Teresa, daughter of the Count of Galve, who became twelfth Duchess of Alba in her own right.

The Dukes of Alba and Berwick married into many of the distinguished families of Spain and so collected heirlooms and objects of great artistic value, which are now to be seen in their palace in Madrid. To these inherited treasures the Duke Carlos Miguel, who lived in Italy and was a great collector, added a number of pictures and engravings.

It will be evident that the collection contained in this palace is no common one; it has, also, the advantage of being seen in a private house, which forms a far more artistic setting than any Museum. Each of the families connected by marriage has contributed to the collection in greater or lesser degree.

From the house of Berwick come, naturally, portraits of the Stuarts, including one of Mary, Queen of Scots, also of Charles II, James II, the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, the Cardinal of York and a group of the Sobieski Stuarts, besides a number of religious pictures. The Alba family treasures include the inherited pictures which once belonged to the Conde Duque de Olivares, Titian's portrait of the famous Duke of Alba, Raphael's "Virgin of the

House of Alba," Correggio's "School of Love," the "Venus" of Velazquez, a replica of the one in the National Gallery, and a portrait of the Infanta Margarita by the same painter. At a later date came works of art belonging to the family of the wife of the fifteenth Duke, Francisca de Montijo, the sister of the late Empress Eugénie. And that opens up a pathetic page of history.

There is a room in the palace devoted to the memory of the Second Empire. Here we see the portraits of the Emperor and Empress by Winterhalter and many relics of the beautiful and unfortunate lady who came here just over a year ago to die.

Besides the pictures, porcelain, tapestry, furniture and statuary to be seen here, there is a famous library and a collection of manuscripts and autograph letters, some of which are exposed in glass cases. A snap-shot note on these would necessarily be an absurdity, and we have already lingered too long in this fascinating house when we ought to be taking our walks abroad.

One of the many walks that can be taken, starting from the Puerta del Sol, is that which leads down the Calle Mayor to the little Plaza de la Villa, where the pale brick Tower of Luján stands to the left of a pretty garden in which is a statue of Admiral Alvaro de Bazán. In the Luján Tower Francis I was imprisoned when first he came to Spain after Pavía, and in the palace at the south end of the Plaza Cisneros lived; both tower and palace have been badly restored, but the general effect is

picturesque. Opposite the tower is the Town Hall, a fine building dating from the end of the seventeenth century, which is worth a visit if only for the sake of Goya's "Allegory of the Town of Madrid." This picture has a history of its own and is an allegory in more senses than one.

Goya painted, to order, a picture of a figure representing Madrid pointing to a medallion on which was the portrait of Joseph Bonaparte; allegorical figures of Victory and of Fame with her trumpet completed the apotheosis of the Rey Plazuelo. When the allies gained possession of the city they had the portrait painted out and the word "Constitution" painted in. When Joseph returned for a brief space, he had the portrait restored, and after his final departure it was again replaced by the word "Constitution." In 1872, when the Constitution was somewhat out of date, Vicente Palmaroli removed the successive layers of paint only to find that Goya's original portrait was scraped and spoiled beyond reparation. So he painted in the words "Dos de Mayo," which may be seen to-day.

On beyond the Plaza is the palace of the Dukes of Abrantes, now the Italian Embassy, and, on the left side of the end of the Calle Mayor, the Palace of the Conséjos of which Herrera was the architect. Near it is the monument to those who fell on the Royal wedding-day, killed by a bomb that was thrown from a window in the palace.

Another of the older palaces of Madrid is the Audiencia in the Plaza de Provincia, near the

opening of the Calle de Atocha. It was designed by the Italian, Giovanni Battista Crescenti, and was begun in 1629, finished in 1634, the date carved on the façade.

But, when all is said and done, it is far more amusing to discover for yourself some relic of the past or some good bit of architecture—as, for instance, the Gateway of the Hospital of San Fernando—than to go out with that object in view. The lure of the wanderer must always be the unexpected. If you are bound for San Francisco el Grande and you drive down the Calle de Bailén and along the Viaduct from which such fine views are obtained, passing the Vistillas, do not retain your motor when you enter the church. Leave it on foot and walk up to the Plaza de San Andrés and explore for yourself.

A question of interest to the wanderer is that of suitable restaurants wherein to refresh mind and body. I confess that I know very little of these ; the few that I entered in the principal streets struck me as being very solemn. There was none of the irresponsible gaiety that one associates with them in London and Paris ; they were not attractively decorated and there was no music. The truth is that society goes to the hotels and does not frequent restaurants, while the livelier sort are associated with dance clubs. So the ordinary restaurant falls between two stools. But there was one that always attracted me, the celebrated Casa de Botín in the Plaza de Herradores, just off the Calle Mayor. This café was founded in 1620 and



CALLE DE ALCALÁ. MADRID



MONUMENT OF ALFONSO XII, RETIRO PARK



has remained exactly as it was at that date. The walls are lined with white tiles with coloured borderings, the little wooden tables and chairs are as simple as possible ; the food is excellent and is brought to the table in ancient blackened pottery dishes which are as old as the house. Those who frequent the ancient House of Botín are chiefly the poor and the small shopkeepers, but there is always a sprinkling of the upper classes and of foreigners. Sometimes you may see a party of peasants celebrating some anniversary. The father and mother, the grandmother, the children with, apparently, a few friends, will sit in silence, enjoying their meal. Soup with eggs, stews in the dishes blackened by two hundred years of fire, auroras con crema, a bottle of wine —what could anyone wish for more ? There is another tavern, not so well known, where the rich Madrileño and the tourist out for a new sensation never come, the Pasteleria de Candido, sobrino de Botín. Here you find the same tiles lining the walls, the dishes are the same as those used in the famous café, and the cooking is equally excellent. Another popular resort is the Café de la Magdalena, where you can see quite good dancing on a tiny stage, and where the audience dance themselves between the acts. Sitting in the balcony which is divided up into boxes, you may, perhaps, be joined by some of the artists and, if you make yourself agreeable, perhaps they may invite you to pay them a visit behind the scenes.

My wanderings about Madrid were not always made on foot. I remember dining with some

American friends at the Botín before going to the theatre. As we passed another and smaller café, we saw a driver standing by the side of his vehicle ; he had a glass of wine in one hand and a piece of bread in the other. We hailed him and asked if he were going to give the bread to the horse and drink the wine himself. For all answer he took the bread, dipped it in the glass until it had absorbed all the wine, and then gave it to the horse. Like the historic steed that drank a whole pail of sack, left by mistake on the ground, and then charged in battle as never horse had charged before, our nag took us to the theatre in no time.

But of all the restaurants that I visited, the one that has left an unfading impression is the famous Pombo, the café chosen as a meeting-place by a group of literary men and artists. It is not that Pombo itself is striking ; “ the venerable Crypt,” as it is affectionately called by the habitués, is made notable by the men who come here every Saturday night and by the history of its meetings written by D. Ramon Gomez de la Serna.

A small party, under the guidance of D. Andrés Gonzalez Blanco, invaded Pombo unexpectedly one Saturday evening and were accorded a most cordial welcome. We found about fifteen or twenty members of the Society sitting round a small inner room ; under a picture representing some of them, painted by Gutiérrez Solana in a caustic mood, sat the genial President, who very soon made us feel at home. Laughing, talking, gesticulating, he was the life and soul of the party, a man with a full face,

dark hair and fine hands. With him were many men who had already made their mark in one or other of the creative arts. I can recall Bagaría, the famous caricaturist, with his powerful head and long black hair; Tomás Borrás, the author of the libretto of the popular opera *El Avapiés*; and the painter Gutiérrez Solana, who came in late and sat apart. Another distinguished member, a poet of the ultraista school, was prevailed on to read a production of de la Serna's which he called a Sonnet and which consisted of one word "snow," nieve. As the President of Pombo has written some charming verse, he will forgive me if I talk about his little joke. "Nieve, nieve, nieve . . ." the words were reiterated over and over again. In spite of the absurdity of the thing, it gave me the sensation of falling snow, and as I try to focus my ideas, and to say something worth saying about this delightful evening, the noiseless snowflakes fall and cover everything up in an impenetrable mantle. They cover up the caricatures that Bagaría drew of us, and the Chinaman from whom we bought trifles, and the waiter, who is also a poet, and the members of the Club, and the President himself, and Pombo, that venerable Crypt.

"Nieve, nieve, nieve . . ."

## CHAPTER XV

### THE NATIONAL MUSEUMS

THE palace that contains the National Museums stands facing the Recoletos and backing on to the Calle de Serrano, a long and populous street that runs parallel with the avenues. It is an imposing building that was erected between 1866 and 1894, and within it are housed the National Library, the Archæological Museum, the Museum of National Archives and the Gallery of Modern Art.

The Archæological Museum is approached from the Serrano entrance that is guarded by the bronze Sphinxes of Moratilla. It contains a collection that is too important to be treated discursively, but a few words may be said about those exhibits that illustrate the beginnings of art in the Peninsula.

It is always good to go to the root of any movement and this is especially true of art in Spain, which is often supposed to have sprung up miraculously, in a moment of time, like Minerva, or Madrid herself, for the matter of that. Although the Cave drawings found in Altamira are avowedly the oldest in the world, and although Spanish painting has its "Primitives" and Spanish architecture

went through many phases before it was inspired by France and Italy, the belief persists that the dawn of the Golden Century was also the dawn of Spanish art.

There are many attractions in the Museum. The casual visitor may wander about among the curiosities of Mexico and the New World or among the treasures of the old ; but, in order not to be overwhelmed by the whole collection, it may be better to confine our attention to one section. Before turning away, however, from the early paintings, the ceramics, the ivories, the fragments of architecture, Visigothic, Gothic, Roman, Moorish, Renaissance, the tombs and the mediæval carvings, to make our way to the Iberian rooms near the main entrance, it will not be out of place to glance at some of the earliest exhibits in order to contrast them with the truly primitive art of the earlier race.

The great Crucifix with its ivory Christ dates from the first half of the eleventh century ; it is Byzantine in form and treatment, at once grotesque and intricate as to workmanship. The tomb of Martin Fernandez, his wife and sons dates from 1371-1373 ; that of D. Felipe Boil, who died in 1384, is early Gothic. The tombs executed in alabaster of Doña Aldonza de Mendoza and Doña Costanza de Castilla, the granddaughter of Pedro I, are also very fine, the latter having unique bas-reliefs ; and there is also the tomb of Pedro I. The fragments of some stalls, carved for the nuns of Gradefés in León, are thirteenth century and show Arabic influence, while those from the monastery of Parrál are in the

transition style of the end of the fifteenth century and are executed in walnut wood. To go back to the earliest specimens of art in this section we find fragments of the capitals of columns, of bronzes and of tombs, the most important of these being two tombs executed in marble, which are decorated with bas-reliefs and which date from the fourth century.

To pass from these exhibits, instinct with the artistic genius of Roman and mediæval times, to the Iberian rooms, is to pass from one state of civilization to another. And that other, more remote, more incomprehensible, more primitive, is intensely interesting.

The Iberians, as we know, are supposed to be the original inhabitants of the Peninsula: in 500 B.C. they were joined by the Celts, and they were also colonized, to a limited extent, by the Greeks and the Phœnicians. By these three races their artistic work was influenced, as is clearly shown, but the interesting question arises as to what was the original inspiration. This question is one that is creating much interest among present-day archæologists, and recent researches have thrown some light on the subject, although the whole matter is still enveloped in mystery. As to the later influence of the Celts and the Greeks, there is no doubt. Any-one who knows the decorative designs of the Celts cannot fail to be struck by the similarity of some of the designs executed by the Iberians, especially in the beautiful goldsmith's work recently added to the collection. The Greek influence is even more

apparent, although most of the statuary is uncouth and primitive. Mr. Horace Sanders tells us, in his *Weapons of the Iberians*, that the famous "Falcata" or sickle sword, that the Romans adopted and called the "Iberian sword," was adapted from a Greek model. The Iberians were, however, noted smiths and certainly acquired great fame in respect of weapons of war.

The Iberian rooms contain much that does not strike the casual observer as interesting at first sight. There are cases containing fragments of weapons, rows and rows of quaint little figures, bits of pottery, the usual apparently heterogeneous collection of objects, or fragments of objects, saved from the wreck of time. But there are three exhibits that stand out and attract attention: the beautiful bust placed in the centre of the room under a glass-case and two uncouth masses of granite that faintly resemble a four-footed animal. From the beautiful to the grotesque—from achievement to dim groping—these things had a peculiar attraction for me and made me pause to try to think it out.

Found at Elche, in the neighbourhood of Alicante, the superb bust was taken to Paris in 1897 and exhibited in the Louvre; it has been recently restored to Spain by the authorities. Monsieur Paul Lafond, in his *La Sculpture espagnole*, thinks that it may be as early as the fourth century before Christ; but no fixed date can be assigned. It is known as the Lady of Elche.

We see before us the head and shoulders of a woman. Her features are beautiful, yet have not

the perfect regularity of the Greek type ; her face is oval, her nose straight, her eyelids are full and partly hide her eyes that have an enigmatic expression ; her mouth pouts. On her brow she wears a tiara and at the side of her head, completely hiding her ears, is a wheel-shaped ornament. She wears a heavy chained necklace with a large medallion, and a cloak is thrown over her shoulders. There are traces of colour. This is a superb work of art.

On the other hand the shapeless masses of granite attract by their archaic character. They are known as the "Toros de Guisando," having been found in the garden of the monastery of that place ; whether they are bulls or wild boars, as some suggest, and which they rather resemble, is beside the mark. The interesting point is that they were evidently made for some purpose. It has been supposed that they were intended to be placed on tombs, but it is far more likely that they were used as signposts, to show the way to those driving cattle across the trackless plains. This supposition gains ground when it is considered that they were found in great quantities near the high road between Ávila and Toledo, although most of them seem to have disappeared since they were first discovered in 1597. What a picture of a remote past they conjure up ! Starting from Toledo, which from earliest times had a fort on its spur of granite overlooking the Tagus, the traveller had a weary way to go across vast, roadless plains before gaining the equally ancient Ávila, and he must have looked out anxiously for these grim sentinels to guide him on his way.

Rough and weather-beaten by the winds and rains of centuries, they impress us now by reason of their connection with the past.

One morning when I was wandering about in this room, I met a party of students belonging to the Junta para ampliacion de estudios who had come to hear a lecture, which, owing to the kindness of the Secretary, D. A. Solalinde, I was allowed to hear also.

The distinguished Professor who lectured to us was more interested in the original race than in the foreign influences by which it had been affected. The mystery that enveloped the origin of the Iberi, he told us, made their artistic production more interesting. This mystery was deep, but not impenetrable, researches were being made at the moment that might throw light on a fascinating subject. Who were the Iberi? he asked. Where did they come from? What was the unknown tongue in which inscriptions were written in Greek characters? Where was the cradle of this mysterious people? So far, investigators had failed to give a definite answer to these questions. All that could be said was that their art, in spite of certain influences, was totally unlike that of any other nation.

The Professor took some of the votive figures from their case to show the peculiar character that differentiated them from votive figures in other lands. These little images were discovered near Albacete and are known as the Cerros de los Santos, although they do not represent Saints, nor even

gods, being probably portraits of the men, and chiefly of the women, of the day. Rude, sometimes grotesque, these figures have much character, if little beauty. The dress is formal, sometimes sacerdotal, one or two suggested the Egyptian head-dress. The clothes were profusely ornamented, the necklaces heavy, the hands invariably joined as if in prayer. Monsieur Lafond thinks that they may date from the sixth or fifth century before Christ.

After we had examined these and admired "The Lady of Elche" and learned something of the weapons and other exhibits in this room, we were hurried across others where there was nothing that touched on the subject in hand. The Professor rejected whole-heartedly everything that did not concern us, waving a deprecating hand at some wonderful Greek vases of the first half of the fifth century B.C.—black on red they were and red on black, as well as one of creamy white—passing on through a room devoted to pottery, where he stopped to point out objects of interest, before hurrying on to the next resting-place. We ran after him in a bunch, pausing where he paused and listening to his instructive and ambulant remarks, the students scribbling in their notebooks and peering over each other's shoulders to see the object about which he was talking. To me by far the most interesting exhibits, after the statues, were the ornaments and defensive armour recently discovered. Here can be observed the delicate and decorative work of this artistic race.

Much as I enjoyed wandering about these galleries,

which are connected by glazed courtyards in which the larger specimens of architecture are arranged, they are so cold that I was always glad to get out into the sunshine. "There is central heating," an attendant observed to me one day when I was shivering, "but no heat!" He walked away, smiling, evidently pleased with his little joke, but it was one that, at the time, did not appeal to me.

In order to reach the National Library we have to approach it through the entrance overlooking the Recoletos. The entrance hall is imposing with its double flight of marble steps leading up to the Picture Gallery, but once we have passed into the Library itself there is little to impress the eye. The public Reading Room is vast and cold; there is nothing to suggest that we are arriving at one of the greatest libraries in the world. As we pass into the rooms devoted to special studies, we begin to understand. There, in a case, are some examples of the eight hundred editions of *Don Quixote* which the Library possesses. And on the walls are prints and in the glass-cases are glorious painted Missals, while a whole gallery is devoted to a collection of autographs. More thrilling to a bookworm are the rooms containing glazed bookcases curtained inside, for in these are kept valuable, or invaluable, early printed books, the *incunabula* dear to the heart of a bibliophile.

The Library was founded by Philip V in 1711, the great collection of the Duke of Osuna being added in 1886.

Amongst the illuminated MSS. may be noted the

tenth-century *Codex Toledanus*, the celebrated *Fuero Juzgo*, the Visigoth Code of Laws, the *Siete Partidas* of King Alfonso the Wise and many other documents of inestimable value. But space is wanting to speak at length on this subject.

Although the same may be said about early Spanish printing, yet a few words on this subject is almost inevitable. To anyone interested in this fascinating study, there is no place where he can indulge his passion better than in the National Library of Madrid. One hint may be of use to the student. If you have the opportunity of walking along the seven-storied building where the books are kept, you will be told that the books are classed according to size, not according to subject or author. The system is neat and economical of space, but it has its drawbacks. It is necessary, when asking for any book, old or new, to know if it be an octavo or a duodecimo ; without that information you may have to wait some time before it is discovered.

In all the history of early printing, that of Spain has been the most neglected ; it therefore offers a fine field to the enterprising scholar. The best book that I could discover was the well-known work by Konrad Haebler, who, without any attempt to present his subject in an attractive manner, gives a great deal of practical information.

Printing was invented somewhere about 1450, but it does not appear to have travelled to Spain for some years ; the earliest book printed in the Peninsula is dated 1468 and is known as the Barcelona book, although it was probably printed in

Valencia. In the beginning the Master Printers who set up their presses in Spain were foreigners, chiefly Flemings or Germans. These travelling craftsmen made centres in the principal towns, they formed associations with other printers and broke them up again, and appear to have preferred a wandering existence. There is an infinity of romance in their lives. The rude presses that they set up brought new life to the people amongst whom they worked, to whom they had come as strangers, and whom they left so much the richer.

The first town to set up a printing press was Valencia, where Lambert Palmart was working in 1474; Matthew of Flanders established two presses at Zaragoza in 1475: in 1477 three new presses were set up in Murcia, Seville and Tortosa. In 1478 there was much activity in Barcelona where Brun, a Master Printer who had left Tortosa, entered into partnership with Pedro Posa, a Catalan Priest, but they afterwards separated. Posa was a wandering Master who printed a number of books, considering the limited output of those times. He produced six books in 1482 and thirteen between 1488 and 1501, the last that he printed bore the mark of a pelican feeding her young. His total production was twenty-eight books, some of which are very rare.

Another Master Printer of more than common interest is *Ælius Antonius Nebrissensis*, orator, grammarian and historian, a Spaniard who became interested in printing when travelling in Italy. He was recalled to Spain in 1473 by Bishop Fonseca, and

set up a press in his own house. He was one of the first to make use of copyright in Spain, as the words "Cum privilegio" show that are found on his title pages after 1510. His son Sancho had a press in his house in Granada, and used a mark like a pair of compasses with the motto : "Arcta est quæ dicit ad vitam."

Zamora, Valencia, Salamanca, Burgos, all the great cities have their histories of early printing. Friedrich or Fadrique of Basle worked for thirty years at Burgos ; he was the first to use the printer's mark of a black rectangle with the head of a lion and his initials, surmounted by a skull and the motto : "Nihil sine causâ," which other printers used afterwards, replacing his initials with their own. In Zaragoza Paul Hurus and his son Johann did splendid work for three-quarters of a century, introducing woodcuts ; the "Quattuor Allemani" were busily engaged at Seville. Another interesting personality of those days was Giovanni Tomasio Favaroia, "el sabio Milanés," who published books at almost all the printing presses, and was a great patron of letters. In 1491 Meinhard Ungut set up his press at Seville ; he was also employed by the great Cardinal Cisneros to establish the first printing press at Alcalá de Henares. And here, where the famous Polyglot Bible was produced, another great printer was summoned, Arnald Guillen de Brocar, who is reputed to have been a Frenchman.

As the years went by the production increased, and we find P. Kromberger and his son Johann produced two hundred and thirty-nine books in Seville ;



HEAD OF A BOY. VICTOR MACHO



they are famous in Spanish literature as having published the first books of poems and romances.

Madrid came into the field much later, and does not provide us with any examples of books produced when the art of printing was still in its cradle—that is before the year 1500.

Of the two other collections housed in the National Museum there is little space to speak. The Museum of Archives contains much of historical interest, including documents coming from the secularized convents such as Poblet. The Modern Picture Gallery is greatly taken up with pictures painted when art was at a low ebb, but in the rooms devoted to present-day artists there is much to repay careful study. Here we can enjoy the works of the Master Zuloaga, of the genial and gifted Sorolla, whose death occurred only the other day, of Valentín Zubiaurre, Rodríguez Acosta, M. Benedito, Pinazo Martínez, C. Vázquez, Zaragoza, Rusiñol, Andrada, to name only a few. There is also a collection of busts by the late Julio Antonio.

Speaking of that fine sculptor reminds me of an exhibition of the works of a talented pupil of his, which was shown in a large room on the ground floor of the palace. Victor Macho works in marble, in wood, in plaster and in bronze and, like the Greeks, he does not disdain to use colour when he needs it. His finest work was a recumbent figure of his brother, lying on his tomb, with his pale hands crossed on his breast. The face is in marble and has a pathetic expression of mysterious death on the worn features, the monk's robe is in granite. Decidedly

Victor Macho should have a future, none the less because he has known how to take something from his master while keeping his own individuality.

These little exhibitions which are, from time to time, held in the lower rooms of the National Museum are quite a feature of Madrid life. I remember several of them, one being an amusing show of humorous drawings, which attracted quite a crowd.

## CHAPTER XVI

### VALENCIA DE DON JUAN MUSEUM

THIS is a private museum which should on no account be missed, permission to view being easily obtained owing to the public spirit of the owner, His Excellency Don Guillermo de Osma. It is interesting for many reasons. In the first place because it is devoted exclusively to the arts and the artistic products of Spain, and in the second place because it contains, amongst other treasures, one of the finest collections of Hispano Mauresque pottery in the world.

Don Guillermo de Osma, who has been Deputy and a Minister of the Crown, is a member of many learned societies and is M.A. of Oxford, for which reason he takes a special interest in England. He is a man of letters, a patron of art and a connoisseur of the first order. Having inherited art treasures, which were increased by the Valencia de Don Juan collection that came through his marriage with the heiress of that family, and having been gifted with the *flair* of the collector, his possessions increased until there was no room for them in the house. Part of the Valencia de Don Juan collection was removed to the Archæological Museum, but the

need for a suitable gallery to house the treasures was still there. During one of his visits to England Don Guillermo asked the advice of Sir Hercules Reed, then the Keeper of the Archives of the British Museum. Sir Hercules suggested that he might make a Museum in his own house, so keeping a personal note, instancing the case of the Soane Museum. Here, he said, is a case in point. A collection brought together by a distinguished man who left it to the Nation after his death, where it can be seen to-day in his own house, left just as it was in his lifetime. The idea was adopted, but with a difference.

We all know the Soane Museum, which has an additional attraction because of the quaint setting, but we must admit that the house with its queer little rooms, its spiral stairs and the cellar where the alabaster sarcophagus is hidden, is not really adapted to show off the exhibits in the best light. And yet there is an undoubted charm, especially in the larger rooms, which speak eloquently of the master's hand. Señor Osma has done better than that. He has built on to his house in the Calle Fortúny light and airy galleries in which the collection shows to the best advantage, and as they open out of his library he can supervise all arrangements himself.

Having built the Museum, and having begun to arrange the contents, a code was drawn up and trustees were appointed to see that the founder's wishes were carried out in the future. Out of the five trustees two were always to represent the

British Museum and the Hispanic Society of America, Sir Hercules Reed and Mr. Archer Huntingdon being the first to be nominated. As to the future of the Museum, the founder desired that the specimens of Spanish arts and crafts which it contains should always be kept together in one collection ; that native and foreign students should be allowed to work there, and that if, for any reason, the Museum should not be kept up in Spain, the collection should be transferred either to the Hispanic Society in New York, or to the University of Oxford. With the latter Señor Osma desired to keep up a spiritual link, an account of the progress of the work being sent each year to the Chancellor of the University. And every year students are sent from Oxford to Madrid who desire to study these particular subjects ; they have the benefit, not only of the Museum galleries, but of the splendid Library which contains all the important books that have been written on the subject.

The first impression received on entering the Museum is one of light and space. To the right, down some steps, is the library ; to the left is a gallery, divided into three bays by white Moorish arches, which is approached by white marble steps. The light vaulting of the white arches and the pale grey and white of the tiled pavement give an impression of airy elegance. At the end of the gallery the reds and blues of a sixteenth-century tapestry give a note of subdued colour ; there are some pictures on the walls, and in the cases are all sorts of exhibits. Had we time to examine them

we should see miniatures and enamels, glass and china, a curious collection of little jet reliquaries made for the pilgrims to Santiago, medals and missals, painting and autographs—the list is not half completed. It is best to leave them for another day, in order to get some idea of the Hispano Mauresque lustre pottery, of which we have caught some glimpses through an open door into the next room.

All books dealing with this special subject mention the Osma collection ; a good notice of it, although not an exhaustive one as the book deals with other arts as well, is to be found in Mr. Leonard Williams' *Arts and Crafts of Older Spain*. One of the attractions of the Museum is that the development of lustre pottery can be studied from its sober beginning to its flamboyant finish.

It has been well said that the Arabs never initiated any art. They were good craftsmen and they always adopted the inventions of the nations that they conquered. We are, therefore, not surprised to learn that when they overran Egypt they adopted the potters' art as practised by the Copts, who were keeping alive an older tradition. Just as it was the Christian Copt who designed the first Mosque, so this same people, brought into conquered Spain by the Arabs, took with them the potters' secret of lustred tiles. When the Almohades invaded the Peninsula towards the end of the eleventh century, they found the Spanish Moors making vessels of glazed earthenware and azulejos, or tiles. Travellers of a very early date speak of a "golden pottery" which evoked their admiration.

The pottery found at Fostat in Egypt shows a milk-white glaze with red and gold lustre, or greyish glaze with red or golden lustre, decorated with Kufic inscriptions. The earliest pottery of this type known in Spain has few colours and slight lustre ; as the potter arrived at the perfection of craftsmanship, the temptation of piling on the glittering lustre and of overcharging the decoration led the way to decadence. In this collection there are perfect specimens of every period. There has always been a great deal of fine pottery produced in Spain ; Saguntine pottery came from the Greek Colony of Saguntum, Roman pottery from Triana, Valencia and Malaga were early centres ; after the beginning of the fourteenth century, Manises was the chief centre for lustre ware.

Some early specimens in this Museum include a famous cream and gold wall plaque found built into a house in Granada ; it has a design of vine leaves and was executed in the reign of Yusuf III of Granada, date between 1450 and 1470. There is also a fifteenth-century tile from the Alhambra, an eight-pointed star tile and a Bol Couvert from Manises, date about 1450. Some early and rude examples of the art of Teruel and Valencia show the peculiar jade green and manganese colouring that is so characteristic, and we may note that the Almohades used green, black, honey-colour and deep purple in their ware. Here, too, are examples of non-lustred Andalusian ware and some interesting early tiles. In a case by themselves are specimens of the "Cuerda Seca" pottery called "Puente del

Arzobispo" from the name of the village near Toledo where it was made. We see here a large bowl, which was probably used as a small fountain and many other pieces, constituting the only collection of this ware that exists, though a few isolated pieces are scattered about in Spain; two are to be found in the Louvre and one in an exhibition in Venice. The process consisted in placing a wooden or metal mould on the unbaked clay, leaving the pattern in slight relief; this raised pattern was then washed over with manganese and grease, and the spaces were filled with colour. After baking, the pattern stood out in bold relief as a dark outline, and the effect was simple but striking. This ware is polychrome and non-lustre.

This method was superseded by the Cuenca, which consisted of a stamped pattern that remained in relief, and by the more popular Pisano, invented by an Italian working in Seville, in which the surface was coated with a monochrome glaze, painted and fired. Without going into detail we may note that the process became more complicated and the ingredients used more various as the art of the potter advanced. For example, we read of a dish being covered with a white varnish and polished, after which it was covered with a varnish composed of pounded lead, tin and sand; it was then baked and a coating applied of vinegar, powdered silver, vermillion, red ochre and wire; a design was painted on with a feather, and it was baked once more.

It is in the inner gallery that most of the specimens of the great period, as well as those of the beginning

of decadence, are placed. The room has dull red walls on which hang some dark portraits with here and there a trophy of armour ; in the centre of the gallery are old oak tables and high-backed chairs, and round the walls are the cases from which a subdued metallic radiance arrests the attention.

The lustre pottery of the best period—that is to say, during the reigns of Alfonso V and John II of Aragon : roughly from 1416 to 1470—can be divided into two classes. In the first you will find pottery of a deep, rich blue colour, with a fine lustre showing Saracenic influence and having Arabic inscriptions. It has frequently a pattern derived from the Tree of Life, with Moslem arabesques and the word “Alafia,” blessing, written in Arabic letters. A fifteenth-century tile shown here has this inscription, and a dish has it written in blue and lustre with spur band and hatching.

In the second period you will find foliage and plant form, showing the European influence, Gothic lettering with flower and leaf as filling. There is a fine dish here with seven crowns and another has a Y, the initial letter of Ysabel of Castile, surmounted by a crown on a filling of flower and leaf on a dotted ground, dated 1475. It is interesting to see how the Saracenic influence dies out, how the Arabic words become disintegrated and reappear as pattern, how flower and leaf supersede the earlier designs of animals. The vine leaf, too, which in the early specimens is sharply pointed, becomes rounder and is finally used as pattern, as dotted filling to back a design.

One fine early specimen, one of the earliest in the collection, has a deep undercut brim and a raised centre on which is a design of a winged dragon in blue on a patterned ground of gold ; on the back is a projection with a hole pierced from which a cord was attached in order to hang it up, a sign of an early date, as later dishes had two holes pierced before firing.

After the expulsion of the Moors the lustre pottery declined, and the potteries founded in 1726 by the Count of Aranda as well as those of the Buen Retiro, which had been founded by Charles III in 1559, although they produced costly and artistic ware, could not be looked on as national art. Potters from Italy imitated Capo de Monte china, those from France imitated Sèvres, Germans introduced Dresden and Englishmen from Staffordshire the lustre ware of Wedgwood. In no sense can this china, though produced in Spain by Spanish potters working under the direction of foreigners, be compared to the typical and unique Hispano-Mauresque pottery.

When I saw this Museum it was still in a state of stress ; the workmen were still busy, some of the pictures were away being photographed, the exhibits were still being arranged, but the Library appeared to have reached its final stage, and here I spent several happy mornings and had the pleasure of meeting the dignified, white-haired owner. I remember that he told me that he bought all books that dealt with his special subject but that, as all were not worth preserving, he regularly discarded

those that did not come up to his standard. The number thrown out in a single year amounted to something like four hundred.

With regard to my scheme for a book on Madrid, Señor Osma was pessimistic.

" You may begin that book," he said genially, " but you will never finish it ! "

I have often wondered, as the months went by and so little was accomplished, whether he would not turn out to be a true prophet.

Since writing these words I have heard the sad news of Señor Osma's sudden death. He will be remembered as the founder of the Chair of Spanish Literature in Oxford, and as one who was always a good friend to England.

## CHAPTER XVII

### ART AND INDUSTRY

THE Academy of fine Arts, formerly the Academy of San Fernando, was instituted by Philip v ; his successor, Ferdinand vi, established it in its present position in the Calle de Alcalá. Compared with the white marble façade of its neighbour, the Casino, one of the principal clubs of Madrid, the palace in which the pictures are housed has a somewhat depressing appearance. It was designed by Churriguera and modified by Diego Villanueva ; the gallery is on the first floor and is approached through a courtyard and up a flight of stone stairs. On the walls of the usually silent and deserted rooms the pictures are hung negligently, as if they were of no account, almost as if they were ashamed to remain when nearly all the great pictures that once adorned the collection have been removed to the Prado. Amongst those that remain I remember some good examples of the austere art of Zurbarán and works by Ribera, Carreño and Murillo, with the " Christ Crucified " of Alonso Cano and Pereda's interesting " Dream of Life." Goya is represented by an inferior picture of Ferdinand vii on an absurd horse, by the characteristic head of

the "Tirana" and the admirable portrait of his friend Moratín, as well as by some spirited sketches. Here, too, is Meng's coquettish "Marquesa de Llano," redolent of the eighteenth century, and a head by Tiepolo, very modern in treatment, with silver-grey tonalities in the flesh tints.

From art to industry is but a step, especially if we can bridge over the dividing line by a visit to the Royal Carpet and Tapestry factories in the Calle de Fuenterrabia, hard by the Basilica of the Atocha. The story of the industry goes back to the seventeenth century, though it was not officially established till the eighteenth.

In the matter of tapestries Spain had been distinctly spoiled by the ease with which she procured these from the Low Countries, but when the Gobelin factory started in 1662, followed soon after by that of Beauvais, she began to think of competing. It was not, however, until 1720 that the first Royal factory was set up by Philip v, a monarch who was always keen to foster any enterprise that encouraged art or industry. There had been attempts made before by private enterprise, but they had never succeeded in establishing a permanent base. Those who remember Velazquez' famous picture "The Spinners"—and who does not?—will call to mind that it was painted in the workshop in the Calle de Santa Isabel where a private individual set up eight looms in 1625. Philip started his industry in the Casa del Abreviador, near the Puerta de Santa Barbara, and he employed Jacob Van der Goten to superintend the work. Van der Goten came of a

family of weavers settled in Antwerp ; he and his descendants personified the history of weaving in Spain for several generations. When only one of this family remained, Spaniards were introduced into the management and the business was carried on until 1808, when the factories and even the tapestries on the looms suffered so much at the hands of the invaders that it was discontinued until 1815. After that date it was continued until 1889, when it became a private concern and was brought to its present quarters in the old olive grove of the Convent of Atocha.

The most interesting period of the tapestry weaving was that in which reproductions of Tenier's pictures were made and when Goya was painting the series of designs now in the Prado. It is rather amusing, as well as instructive, to be told that Goya's charming pictures were not approved by the weavers. The head officials complained that he gave his characters too many head-dresses, ribbons, gauzes and other adornments, which took up the time and exhausted the patience of the weavers. "And the work was wasted." So the painter had to modify some of his designs, because they were more suited to oil paintings than to the weaver's shuttle, and we can but remember the intricate yet suitable designs of those early artists who did not disdain to subordinate their conception to the demands of the medium in which it was to be finally represented. Goya's designs were rolled up and left in a cellar of the Royal Palace until recent times, when they were discovered and placed

in the Prado. Between 1776 and 1791 he designed forty-five scenes for this purpose. Picnics and harvests, fortune-tellers and highwaymen, society beauties masquerading as majas, with cavaliers, bullfighters and chulos, they give us delightful sidelights into the life of the day. Admirable as they are when considered as pictures, it must be confessed that the effect in tapestry is often disappointing.

I had the advantage of visiting the factory with my friend, Miss Moran, who had a special permit from the palace which enabled us to see the work in all its detail. We saw the sheds in the garden where the wool was being dyed in the vats and the dyed wool hung out to dry in the sun, where the ochres, greens, blues and reds made a splash of colour in the wintry scene. We then visited the carpet factory where we found great hand-looms before which boys and girls in some cases, or grown men and women in others, stood on wooden platforms busily employed in binding and tying the wool as the pattern demanded. Nearer the windows were women repairing tapestry, some of which had been woven in the factory a hundred years ago.

The carpets were exhibited in a large hall where the bold designs and the artistically blended colours showed to great advantage. They are designed by artists on the staff and are often made specially for the room for which they are wanted. The carpets are therefore entirely executed in the factory and are made of home-grown wool, which, as we have seen, is dyed on the premises.

In the tapestry work-rooms we found the weavers

sitting behind their looms, working in the *haute lisse* system, and we stood and watched them for some time. The skill and swiftness with which they manipulated their bobbins, passing the thread which made the warp across the vertical weft threads, bespoke long practice. Some of them had been working at the looms for many years and some came of families where the generations succeeded each other, as was the custom with the craftsmen of old.

D. Levinio Stuyck, the Director, who kindly showed us over, said that his family had been connected with the industry for many generations. I remember that he showed us a beautiful Gothic tapestry that he had picked up in Portugal. It was earlier in date than any in the royal collections.

In the Calle del Sacramento, one of the old streets behind the Plaza de la Villa, is Don Rafael Domenech's Museum of Industrial Art, a private enterprise which is open to the public. It contains specimens of rural pottery and of pueblo or rural furniture, as well as an excellent collection of popular embroideries, early weavings, damask, cut velvet, ribbons and other examples of textile art. I owe my introduction to this attractive little gallery to Mrs. Byne, the author of some excellent works on Spanish art, whose expert knowledge on these subjects made the visit doubly interesting.

Among the specimens of furniture were some attractive old Catalan chests, with a design of flat pilasters carved along the front and sides and with carving inside the lid, and some Asturian chests,

decorated with carvings of geometrical designs, all arabesques and wheels. The pottery was good in design and colour and rough in execution, and there were also some early specimens of tiles. But the most interesting part of the exhibition to me was that devoted to the textile industry.

The cut velvet of the time of Ferdinand and Isabella is extremely decorative. Some of the designs come from Moorish or Persian sources ; others have the carnation as base arranged either in natural shape or dissected to form a conventional pattern. The black and white Salamantine work is formed of black silk *appliqué* on white linen ; when a little colour is added it may come from Ávila or the neighbourhood, and when the same type of work is executed all in colours, the black having disappeared, it comes from Extremadura. There were silks from Talavera, damasks of the late seventeenth or early eighteenth century and ribbons, chiefly from Barcelona, that were of all colours with pretty borders. These woven ribbons with floral design or stripes of different colours are very characteristic. The samplers, too, always have a certain sentimental attraction of their own, and there were some examples of fine smocking.

As we left the Museum, which is housed in the upper stories of a house looking down towards the river, we had a vista of flat roofs, horizontal lines broken occasionally by the dome of a church—a typical view of old Madrid, flooded by the rosy light of approaching sunset.

Another friend—how much I owed to my friends !

—took me to see the Central Depôt for Lace, of which she was the Vice-President and the moving spirit. From the moment that we entered the house I could see that Señora Viuda de Beruete was not only a frequent visitor but was really the inspirer of the enterprise. She knew the work and each individual worker, and was responsible for many of the designs adopted.

The Taller Central del Encaje was founded in 1914 by the Condesa de San Rafael, with the object of reviving the art of lace-making, which had been much neglected. During the six years that had passed since its foundation, the Society had copied many old Spanish laces, chiefly those made in the reign of the Catholic Kings. The patterns had been lost, and much patient care was needed before they could be reproduced. They also copied old Milanese bobbin lace and the lace of other countries. A handsome panel of old point lace was copied from a photograph of a specimen in the South Kensington Museum, and a most interesting experiment was being made in the shape of the copy of a picture. This picture represented Don Quixote and Sancho Panza with a company on horse and on foot going along a country road ; it was copied in pillow lace, each worker having a segment of the whole to reproduce with her bobbins. The way that the different gradations in the sky, the difference of substance in human flesh, or wooden cart or the stones in the road, were rendered was most ingenious, and I longed to see the picture put together. But, after all, the real use and value

of the work achieved by the ladies who formed the Committee was in preserving for the future the fast disappearing specimens of old Spanish point lace, and in copying them for the delight of future generations.

The red and blue Talavera embroidery on table-cloths and towels attracted me particularly, and there were also other types of work, although the lace-making and also the lace-mending are the principal objects of the Society's care. Twenty-two girls are employed here, and all the arrangements for their comfort seemed well thought out.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE THEATRE

THE theatre in Spain is one of the most interesting manifestations of the national genius. It derives much from its past history, so much so that one phase of its activity is best appreciated after considering, however superficially, the history of its rise. The light comedies and farces popular in Spain are, to many people, a closed book because of their strong national flavour and the constant use of patois ; they are, nevertheless, capable of adaption into other tongues because the characters are nearly always universal in type and true to nature. Spain is rich now in dramatists, in poetic playwrights and in musical composers, whose works will afford a veritable mine to enterprising managers. The poetic dramas of such men as Villaespesa, Ardavin or Castillo are hardly known outside Spain ; the music of Serrano, Vives, Luna and other composers is likely to be heard soon in London, and will certainly become popular.

The interchange of dramas between England and Spain is becoming more frequent as the two countries get to understand each other better.

Quite recently we have seen one of the plays of the veteran, Don Jacinto Benavente, *Los Intereses Creados*, admirably produced at the Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, under the title of *Bonds of Interest*; the same season saw the charming comedy of Don G. Martinez Sierra, *The Romantic Young Lady*, very well given by the Reandean Company at the Royalty Theatre. And now we hear of the success of *The Admirable Crichton* in Madrid.

As a considerable knowledge of colloquial Spanish is necessary in order to appreciate modern plays, the traveller will do well to go to the theatres which provide short pieces and dancing. There are many of these from the Romea, where the best dancing is to be seen, to the Teatro Comico, the favourite resort of the people, which should on no account be missed. There is only one theatre given up to Revue, the Ideal Rosales, where the Russian Sacha Goudine follows the school of Bakst in decoration and design.

The Opera, or Teatro Real, is a vast building containing two thousand four hundred seats. On "de moda" nights, which answer to what used to be called "Tiara nights" in London, the house presents a brilliant appearance. There is a long interval in the middle of the performance to allow people to visit each other in boxes and stalls, in spite of which the talking that goes on during the singing is more than lively. The Spaniards are a genuinely music-loving race, but the Real is really more a social function than anything else, and some people seem

to prefer the sound of their own voices to those of the singers.

The Teatro Español is, next to the Real, the largest theatre in Madrid. Many classical pieces have been given here, but when I went there it was to see the first night of a curious propaganda play by the novelist, D. José Lopez Pinillos. *La Tierra*, "The Earth," is a tragedy in three acts in which the inhabitants of a village who are nearly always on the stage, like a Greek Chorus, suffer from the brutality of an employer of labour, and finally emigrate in a body in search of better things.

The Princesa is the most modern and up to date of all the theatres. It is noted for the good modern pieces produced under the Guerrero-Mendoza management, and for the lavish scenic decoration employed. It was unlucky for me that the proprietors were away while I was in Madrid, so that I was unable to judge for myself.

Most of the theatres are very inferior in comfort to those that I have mentioned, but there is not one where you cannot pass an agreeable evening. For the most part they produce short plays, farces, or dancing, and are very largely patronized by the townspeople. The theatre is actually a part of their lives, and they are usually full "to capacity."

The Eslava is a small friendly theatre that is always full. The orchestra is not separated from the body of the house, and its members can chat with the front row of stalls in the intervals. The first time that I went there they gave Lope de Vega's



STREET SELLERS OF CHESTNUTS AND ORANGES. MADRID



THE PASEO DEL PRADO AND THE POST OFFICE. MADRID



*La Dama Boba*, in which a promising young actress made her first appearance, Señorita Carmencita Oliver, daughter of the well-known actress, who was also in the cast. On the second occasion I saw an amusing light comedy, *No te ofendas, Beatriz*, by Joaquin Abati, with the popular Catalina Barcena in the title-rôle. The Eslava is the property of the dramatist, Gregorio Martinez Sierra, under whose management much admirable work has been done.

At the Teatro Lara, where one is always sure of passing an agreeable evening, I saw a farce that amused Madrid immensely, *El Puesto de Antiquités de Baldomero Pages*, and one of the Quintero's delightful entremeses, *Lectura y Escritura*, which I have since translated under the title of *Reading and Writing*. It was admirably played by Señora Alba and pretty Señorita Stella Margarita. I saw another of the Quintero's plays at this theatre, *Pasionera*, a comedy in three acts, after which the Argentina danced wonderfully.

In the Teatro del Centro an amusing farce was being given with that excellent pair of comic actors, Señor Bonafé and the elder of the Alba sisters, as principal attraction ; and at the Romea, which is practically a Temple of dance, I saw charming Isabelita Ruiz.

Spanish dancing has been famous ever since the daughters of Cadiz delighted the Romans with their grace, and, indeed, long before the Roman invasion. Founded on the Greek dance, it retained the rhythm and the pantomime that were so characteristic of the Greek choreographic art. Since then, it has

been strongly influenced by Arabic and Gipsy forms of motion, and has been specially inspired by Arabic music.

The Spanish dance, as we see it now, retains much of its primitive character. The pantomime and posture, the rhythm, the gestures, the effort to express emotion, grave and gay, by means of the dance and, above all, the stamping of feet and clapping of hands which preceded music and marked the time, all point to this fact. The Flamenco dancing, which the Gipsies took from the Spaniards and made their own, has this stamping and clapping in a marked degree. Another very typical feature of the Spanish dance is the use of the Castanets. This little instrument, formed of two pieces of polished wood, is capable of great things in the hands of a capable dancer, who will make effects of *crescendo* and *diminuendo* as the steps of the dance gain or lose in velocity.

It is also characteristic of the Spanish dances that the performer uses all the muscles of the body, especially those of the arms, giving the true Eastern sinuous movement, and often expressing more with the arms and hands than with the feet. A certain proud movement of the hips, a swing of the long skirts and a backward tilt of the head are also typical of the Spanish dancer.

But to return to the theatre. Among the many plays that I saw none charmed me more than those written by the well-known dramatists, the brothers D. Serafin and D. Joaquin Alvarez Quintero. Their entremeses and *pasos de comedia*, short

comedies based on one incident, are the direct descendants of the Sainete and short plays of the Golden Century, and they are most typical of Spanish life and Spanish mentality. Although the talented authors have written many three-act comedies, one of which, *Los Galeotes*, was crowned by the Spanish Academy, and others such as *Malvaloca* are models of the playwright's art, their short plays are so characteristic of the people they depict that they give unfailing joy to anyone interested in the country. Whether they write of the Andalusian peasant or of a Society woman they give the very essence of the character. The subject of the play is usually very slight. A husband and wife quarrelling about a proposed visit to the theatre, an ignorant country girl getting an elder woman to write a letter to her lover without knowing that the latter is her son—the themes are slight in the extreme. The dialogue is always crisp and short, the atmosphere is subtly suggested, the people in the play are essentially real flesh-and-blood men and women.

It is not surprising that Don Serafin and Don Joaquin Alvarez Quintero should have become very popular dramatists, and that there should be often several of their plays running at the same time. They have been living in great retirement since the death of another brother, but were good enough to receive me in their sunny flat in the Calle Velazquez.

The *paso de comedia*, of which we have just spoken, was invented by Lope de Rueda, the first professional actor-manager in Spain who, with Bartolomé de Torres Naharro, succeeded in secular-

izing the drama. All theatres had their cradle in the Church, their origin in the Mystery plays, but the Spanish theatre remained under the ecclesiastical wing longer than that of other nations. It happened in this way.

In 1565, a fraternity called the "Cofradía de la Sagrada Pasión," which was founded to feed and clothe the poor, started a hospital in the Calle de Toledo. In order to get money to maintain this hospital, they got leave to provide a place where the strolling players could give their performances. The players, who had as yet no settled home and had to give their comedies in the public squares, were naturally delighted, and the hospital was supported by its share of the box-office receipts. So successful was the venture from the point of view of charity that another society, the "Cofradía de Nuestra Señora de la Soledad," obtained permission to do the same; and the two societies eventually joined forces, two-thirds of the receipts going to the "Pasión" and one-third to the "Soledad."

Religious plays were acted in Spain in the thirteenth century and were already strangely secular in character. Alfonso the Wise, in his *Siete Partidos* (1252-57), objected to the clergy acting farces in church, which was "intended for prayers and not for lewd plays." The autos sacramentales used to be performed on cars which were often gaily decorated and were drawn from place to place, coming to a stand when a convenient spot presented itself. The travelling players, who per-

formed comedies, have been amusingly described by Agustin de Rojas in his *Viaje Entretenido*. He tells us about the various sorts of actors, from the "bululo" who travels alone and recites stories when he can collect the curate, the sexton and any other person who can be persuaded to listen to them, to the companies of four actors who trudge afoot, and to those of twelve actors and one actress who travel in carts and have a chest full of "properties." In any case, they had a hard life, often sleeping in their clothes, giving a performance for some bread and a bunch of grapes, tramping for miles in all sorts of weather, spending the day rehearsing and acting and never sure that they will not have a "command" to act a play at some neighbouring castle at night.

Cervantes saw Lope de Rueda and his little company of three men acting in the Plaza Mayor of Valladolid when he was only about ten or twelve years old. They put up a stage of planks on some benches and hung an old blanket up to conceal the musicians. They had four white wigs and beards, four white sheepskin cloaks trimmed with gilded leather, and four long staves, the usual costume of the strolling players of that date.

The first theatres were simply the courtyards behind the houses, where stages were erected at the farther end; little by little they were partially covered in, seats were placed in front of the standing room where the formidable mosqueteros hissed or applauded, making the good or bad fortune of a play, and a gallery, known as the "Stewpan," was

built for women. The windows of the houses that looked over this courtyard were utilized as boxes, from which the King and the Court, hidden from the crowd by curtains, could see the spectacle.

The three original theatres were the Corral, in the Calle del Sol—now the Carrera de San Jerónimo—the Corrales of la Pacheca and the Burguillos, both in the Calle del Príncipe. The Corral de la Puente, in the Calle del Lobo, was a more sumptuous affair, though it was superseded by the more important Corral de la Cruz, which was opened in 1579. The Corral del Príncipe followed, and was, with the Cruz, the only public theatre of Madrid after 1584. The history of the gradual development of the theatre is well told in H. A. Rennert's *The Spanish Stage*, a book founded, as all such books must be, on the researches of D. Cristóbal Pérez Pastor. From other sources we learn that Cervantes produced two plays that were successful, and others that had no chance because of the arrival on the scene of that phoenix of Literature, Lope de Vega. Cervantes had no genius for the stage, but he resented the way in which Lope monopolized the theatre, remarking that his own plays had not been unsuccessful because the mosqueteros had neither hissed nor whistled, nor thrown cucumbers at the actors during the performance.

Lope de Vega was born in Madrid in that part of the Calle Mayor that was joined on to the Puerta de Guadalajara, close by the Plaza de la Villa and the Tower of Luján. "I was born," he wrote, "a house and a half from the spot where Charles v

imprisoned the pride of France between four walls." The boy was an infant prodigy, dictating poems to his schoolfellows before he could write, and producing plays when he grew up with amazing facility. He was a man of action and adventure, the exact opposite to Cervantes, who was of a reflective and critical turn of mind. Lope lived his romances before writing them; he was always in love and always unfaithful, celebrating his mistress in verse even after he had left her, ever ready for adventure and change. He was imprisoned for libel, banished for six years, during which time he frequently visited Madrid, married twice, had many loves, died in the odour of sanctity, and was accorded a public funeral which lasted nine days. He was essentially a Madrileño; he loved his native city and was much beloved by his fellow-citizens. "Beautiful Babylon," he wrote, "in which I was born, Theatre of reason and of sentiment, School of flattering hopes and of disappointment, Parade ground for all sorts of men, Elysium between the waters of oblivion." And, writing to his master, the banished Duque de Sessa, for whom he wrote love-letters as one of his secretarial duties, he notes that "Madrid is just as Your Excellency left it: Prado, carriages, women, heat, dust . . . comedies."

This versatile genius not only wrote the best lyrical poetry of his time and a matter of one thousand eight hundred comedies and many religious plays, he was also the author of a treatise on the drama: "The new art of making comedies in these

times," which he read before the Academy of Madrid.

The art of the theatre was just then going through a crisis, having progressed a long way since those first theatres had been set up by the *Cofradías*. If Juan del Encima had been the first to take the drama from the church to the palace and Rueda had introduced new stage effects and Naharro new views, a contemporary of Lope's, Juan de la Cueva, had made an innovation that pointed to new horizons. The national theatre had already gone through many phases. The old Greek drama had been banished by the Church, which was to revive the same art by means of the *Mystery* plays. These plays were often ribald enough to scandalize the devout ; and in time they died out, though they were still played in the reign of Philip IV, much to the amusement of the Comtesse d'Aulnoy.

The chief foreign influence to which the native drama had been subjected was that of the Italian strolling players, who had arrived in Spain at a very early date ; but their supreme art lay in pantomime. Although it certainly influenced Spanish drama, it was to the initiative of Rueda and, later, to that of Cueva, that Lope's revolutionary ideas were due.

Juan de la Cueva introduced popular poetry and epic deeds into the theatre, where he brought on the stage the heroes of the poem of the *Cid* ; he also ignored tradition and modernized the business of the stage. Among the rules for composition set forth by Lope, who was inspired by de la Cueva, were the following : the first act must be an ex-

position, the second should contain incidents, in the third the issue should remain doubtful up to the middle, so as to lead curiosity astray. "Evolve the plot from the beginning, and let it go on unfolding until the end, and let the solution not come before the last scene has been reached, for if the public know what is to be the end they will turn their backs upon the stage and their faces to the door!" This is surely an eloquent tribute to the behaviour of an audience in the early days of the seventeenth century.

The fortunes of the theatre varied with different rulers and were affected by public events. In the reign of Philip IV they prospered, for that monarch had his box at the Pacheca, in order to gaze at the actress, Maria Calderona, and another at the Cruz; he also had two performances a week at the palace. On several occasions of public mourning the theatres were closed for months on end, but they always opened again and kept the torch of dramatic enterprise alight.

After Lope de Vega died another Madrileño, Pedro Calderón de la Barca, took his place as Court poet. Calderón had served for nine years in Flanders and Italy, and he never forgot his duty to his country. He insisted on going back to fight for her in later life as a volunteer, and Philip IV tried to prevent him by giving him a commission to write a play. Calderón wrote this play in eight days, and it was performed on the floating stage that was on the lake in the Buen Retiro Park; after which he started for the Front.

Calderón had wonderful imagination ; he is said to have provided many plots for later dramatists. He had also the astounding facility that distinguished Spanish writers, and was a poet of no mean order. But he was not the equal of the men who preceded him, and his fame, great in his day, died out in a short time. Of the later writers we have Echegaráy, whose dramas read admirably, but which appear to be seldom produced, and the Romantic school, which lay between the School of Sword and Cloak and that of modern times.

## CHAPTER XIX

### SOCIAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

MADRID is both very foreign and exceedingly familiar. This statement may seem paradoxical, but it is, nevertheless, true. Life here is so easy and pleasant that it is quite possible to adapt yourself to the habits of the Madrileños and yet go your own way. Speaking personally, I can say that after passing three months in the capital I felt as if I had lived there for half my life. As the porter of the hotel, the shopkeepers and other acquaintances always said, when speaking of their city : "Muy simpatico Madrid!" And so, indeed, I found it, very "sympathetic."

Whether I found Madrid delightful because of my innate interest in Spain, or because of the extraordinary kindness of my friends, old and new, I hardly know. I suppose it was a happy combination of the two, added to the fact that every town has an atmosphere of its own, vibrations that set up sympathetic vibrations in the individual. Whatever it was, the result was highly satisfactory. The days flew by only too quickly, and yet days are longer in Spain than they are anywhere else, owing to the late hours kept. I used to wonder

whether these same late hours were the result of the hot summers, or whether they were simply the result of a tendency to be late in the morning. Who shall say ?

The late hours never annoyed me at all. Luncheon in Spain is about the usual hour, but tea never begins till half-past five or six, and I have known it continue up to nine in the evening. Dinner is at 9.30 or ten o'clock ; the theatres begin at 10.30 and are not over till past one. And then the evening is only just beginning for those of a lively disposition. As I kept up my usual habit of having coffee at half-past seven in the morning, it gave me a very satisfactory day for work, although it sometimes involved burning the candle at both ends.

As to Society in Madrid, I know very little of it, but I must try to say a word or two about it because of the strangely inaccurate ideas that obtain in other countries. It is often said that Spanish society is stiff and the Court terribly formal. As regards the Court, it is true that the functions are formal and even magnificent, but the ordinary life of the King and Queen and their family is quite the reverse. The Queen, who is deservedly popular, associates herself with all charity schemes, besides performing her social functions with much charm. The King, who is noted for his pleasant and informal manners, is also the most easily approached Sovereign in Europe.

As to Society, I can testify, even from my limited experience, that it is particularly pleasant and

friendly, chiefly, no doubt, owing to the fact that it is confined to people who know each other, who are united by family ties or traditional friendships. Outsiders are seldom, if ever, admitted, and where there is no uncertain element there is no stiffness. The habit of calling all friends by their Christian names is another habit that does not make for formality.

The gayest time in Madrid is between Easter and June or July, after which date Society usually drifts off to San Sebastian or Biarritz and begins again those social gatherings that have just been given up in the capital. As I left at Easter I can say nothing of the season. While I was there, there were not many big functions, except those given while the Belgian Sovereigns were staying at the palace, when the Duquesa de Medinaceli gave a great ball. There were, naturally, private dinners, teas and lunches as well as those that were given at the Ritz ; there were winter sports at the Alpine Club which, by the way, was founded by five Englishmen who built the first hut with their own hands ; there was golf at the Puerta de Hierro Club. This Club, which has the King for its patron, has also a Polo ground and tennis courts, and beautiful views are obtained from the grounds. The Alpine Club is in the Guadarrama and is very popular, especially on some Sunday when there has been a good fall of snow in the mountains.

One of the most charming hostesses in Madrid is the Condesa de Casa Valencia, in whose pretty house in the Castellana I enjoyed several afternoon con-

certs. Had I the gift of describing social events I would certainly exercise it, but alas, it is not mine! Sir Esmé and Lady Isabella Howard entertained a great deal at the British Embassy and, as they have both the talent for hospitality that is given to those who have a social instinct, their gatherings were always enjoyable. I have a distinct vision of an evening when the Infanta Isabel was present, wearing wonderful emeralds; her delightfully uncere monious and natural manner would have surprised those who talk of Spanish etiquette. It was a very picturesque sight because among the guests were a newly consecrated Cardinal and a Bishop in trailing cerise silk robes, an officer of the Papal Guard who had come from Rome to be present at the Ceremony which had just taken place, and the staff of the Embassy in their dark blue and gold uniforms.

If we are to believe the critics, Spanish society and the Spanish public take little interest in literature. Larra said once that writing in Madrid was like indulging in a melancholy monologue or like trying to make your voice heard in a nightmare. Alvaro de Alcalá Galiano, who has a mordant sarcasm of his own, coupled with a very wide outlook and a highly cultivated mind, has also said unkind things about the attitude of society in regard to literature.

“The publication of a book in Spain,” he says in *Conferencias y ensayos*, “is an event so common and of such little significance that it passes almost unnoticed in our social world, compared with the extraordinary importance attached to a gala bull-fight or a brilliant speech in Parliament.”

My own very limited experience of Society in Madrid leads me to hold a contrary opinion, but perhaps I was fortunate. I certainly found my Spanish friends not only well acquainted with their own literature, but also with ours, past and present. However that may be, it is by the way. Society is, after all, very much the same all the world over.

The artistic and literary world is, in Spain, a thing apart. There is a very strong element of creative activity in Madrid, as well as a devoted group of intellectual people who give up their time to the advancement of education. Among these latter I must mention the Marqués and Marquesa de Palomares de Duero, who are, together, doing so much for this cause. I passed some pleasant hours in their house in the Calle Genova. A little farther up the street is the flat of the widowed Señora de Beruete y Moret and her son, D. Aureliano, the Director of the Prado. It is pre-eminently the house of an artist, having the pictures collected by the late D. A. de Beruete, the great art critic, as well as a room containing his own landscapes, which are surprisingly vibrant and modern to be the work of a man who spent his life among the works of the Old Masters. D. Aureliano has added to the collection, in which are many interesting, and naturally authentic, pictures. In the drawing-room are two good portraits of the art critic and his wife by Sorolla, the former being a particularly fine example of the broad and liquid style of this artist.

Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Byne, the American architect and his wife, the writer, had a flat at the top

of a high white house at the corner of the Monte Esquinza. It was a picturesque place with a long studio drawing-room filled with old Spanish furniture, some of it being spoil from the Rastro. On the walls were some of Mr. Byne's masterly sketches and studies of models by Mrs. Byne, who liked to paint in her spare time. I remember that one night when I had been dining there we went out on the balcony to call the sereno, my hosts, for some reason, not having the key of the outer door. But no watchman was to be seen. We looked up and down the moonlit street, hoping to catch a glimpse of his friendly lantern, but saw no sign. We clapped our hands and shouted, and our voices echoed down into the silence. At last, when we were beginning to give him up, he appeared and saved the situation. I had heard of people being shut out from their houses, but it had never occurred to me that one might be shut in.

These serenos are the direct descendants of Dogberry ; they have a lantern and a stick and a passkey for the outer doors of all houses. They appear to walk about the streets till daybreak, and must make a living out of the tips that late comers give them. As is only natural, they vary greatly. The sereno in the street where I lived was always at his post when I returned from the theatre, and was quite a jewel ; on the other hand, the night watchman of a street where I used to drop a friend who used often to take me to the play was a perfect terror. We used to clap our hands as loud as we could and call out : "Seren—o !" and the driver



BASQUE PEASANTS, VALENTIN ZUBIAURR



of our pesetero used to join us with a gruff base "Seren—o!" It was usually some five or ten minutes before the sereno, whose favourite coffee-house was probably in the next street, turned up and my friend was admitted, leaving me free to start on the last lap of my journey home.

One of my chief friends in Madrid is the well-known and talented writer, Señora Isabel de Palencia, from whom I have received innumerable kindnesses. She has taken as her principal subjects women and children, her last book being on the psychology of the child—*The Soul of the Child*. Besides writing books and translating books from the English, Señora de Palencia is a journalist, using the pseudonym of "Beatriz Galindo," a dramatic critic and a lecturer. Her successful lecture on Spanish Costume delivered at Leighton House has made her known to English audiences, and she is assured of a welcome when she returns to London. In the studio of her husband, D. Ceferino Palencia, I met many interesting people, amongst whom were D. Valentin Zubiaurre and his charming sister. Valentin Zubiaurre is a Basque and a disciple of Zuloaga; his works are intensely Spanish and very individual. Strong in technique, intentionally cold in colour, he shows us the arid plains, the volcanic mountains and the hard-featured peasants of the north of Spain. In his studio, again, I met many interesting people.

Another studio that I visited with some friends was that of Señor Benavente, a painter of quite opposite tendencies, whose fine portraits were

much admired in London. In his studio were some that I remembered to have seen in Burlington House and many that were new to me. One of these represented a lady lying on a sofa in the attitude of David's famous portrait of Madame Récamier.

Señorita Josefina de Ranero is a brilliant young journalist and a writer of promise who should do much in the not distant future. I owe her much for her unvarying kindness and affection and feel that she will some day, by reason of her intelligence and her vivacity, accomplish whatever she sets out to do. It is not easy for a young girl to make a career for herself in Spain, but every year the difficulty is lessened. There are very many intellectual women in Madrid and they are now advancing all along the line. Some of these have adopted careers, but many have no inclination for such a course, while others have no necessity to work.

I have hitherto only spoken of social functions and artistic gatherings, but I have many pleasant memories of more intimate occasions. One of these is connected with a tragic event that cast a gloom over the whole nation.

During a previous visit to Spain, I had been very much attracted by Señorita Isabel Dato, the daughter of the Prime Minister, who is possessed of a sympathetic manner and a cultured mind. I was glad to meet her again, and accepted with pleasure an invitation to tea on the 7th of March, when I found her in her own sitting-room. There were only two other guests, Señorita de Casa Calderón

and the present Duchesse de Montpensier ; all three spoke fluent English, and the talk ran on books and pictures and the world in general. My hostess, who adored her father, talked of his laborious life and regretted that they saw so little of him in consequence, and she offered me tickets to hear a debate. I knew that the Prime Minister and his family were continually receiving anonymous letters threatening his life, and did not wonder that she seemed sad when she spoke of him, but I was far from suspecting the tragedy that was coming nearer and nearer with every minute that we sat there in the cosy sitting-room with the shaded lamps.

On the following day, the 8th of March, I went to the House of Deputies and took my place in the reserved gallery from whence I had a good view of the horseshoe-shaped building with its semi-circular rows of benches and its high platform where the President and various officials sat. In the blue-cushioned bench reserved for the Ministers there was, as far as I recollect, only one occupant, and the House was only moderately full. The President of the House entered in state, followed by two officials in mediæval costume who stood behind his chair until relieved by others. A few new members were sworn in, and the proceedings began. I confess that I soon tired of trying to understand speeches that were only half heard, and envied the Deputies who seemed to be talking to each other about something else. The two friends whom I had asked to meet me there had gone, by

mistake, to the Senate, where they saw Señor Dato and heard him speak for the last time.

That evening I was bound for the Opera, and found, much to my surprise, the Puerta del Sol filled with a crowd of stationary, perfectly silent people, who were chiefly massed near the Home Office.

They appeared stupefied and there was a sudden sense of disaster. What was it? We could not imagine until we reached the Opera House, to find it closed, and were told by the police that the Prime Minister had been assassinated.

The story was soon all over the town and was related in detail in all the morning papers. The President had left the Senate and was driving home in his motor when, as he approached the Calle de Sagasta by the Plaza de la Independencia, taking the left side of the Puerta de Alcalá, a motorcycle with three men in it shot by, looked into the car to make sure that he was there, fell back and let off a volley into the back of the car. The footman on the box was hit on the head, and fell on to the shoulder of the chauffeur, crying out that he was killed; the chauffeur hurried at full speed to his master's house, where he opened the door of the car to find that he was lying on the floor, wounded. Without losing a moment he went to a neighbouring emergency hospital, where the President breathed his last without recovering consciousness. The scene that followed can be imagined. Priests, doctors, politicians, were summoned in haste; the distracted family of the

murdered man arrived on the scene too late to get even a last word from him they loved. I could not bear to think of the despair of the widow and daughters, and the fact of having been in his house only the day before made me feel this national misfortune from quite a personal standpoint.

On the following day I went to write my name in the book that was kept in the hall, but I did not follow the swarms of people who went to the mortuary chamber, converted into a *chapelle ardente* where Masses were said throughout the day. As I passed the Puerta de Alcalá I found the crowd examining the bullet marks in the stone, and wherever one went there was only one absorbing subject of conversation : the tragedy of the murder and the whereabouts of the murderers who had disappeared down the Calle de Serrano.

I understood that, by request of the family, the funeral was to be a quiet one, and was standing on the morning of the day after—the 10th of March—at the corner of the Serrano and the Goya, where I was living, when the funeral procession came into sight. It was quite a simple affair as it left the house, but when I reached the Castellana I found a dense crowd waiting, and the soldiers were stationed all round the Plaza de Colón. I waited among the people to see it pass, this time with all the ceremonial that befitted a great public funeral, and heard the cries of "The King!" as Alfonso XIII walked on foot after the coffin of the man who had died in his service.

"Prim, Canovas, Canalejas, Dato . . ." the

*Libertad* enumerated the Prime Ministers who had been murdered in Spain ; and the *Correspondencia de España*, after speaking of Canalejas as a great democrat, said that Señor Dato was, before all things, the initiator of the reform of the laws touching the working classes. "Who would have thought"—the paragraph ended—"that Canalejas, the essence of democracy, and Dato, the incarnation of the spirit of social progress, would have died assassinated ? "

## CHAPTER XX

### AN EDUCATIONAL MOVEMENT

THE story of Spain's literary greatness in the past and her subsequent decadence has often been told, but interest is rarely taken in the modern movement towards higher education which now attracts the attention of some of the foremost men and women in Madrid. Mr. J. B. Trend has touched on this question in his latest book, *A Picture of Modern Spain*, and it can be studied in greater detail in *La Literatura Española* of D. A. Salcedo Ruiz. My interest was aroused after a visit to the Residencia, the Residence for Students, and because of the activities of the literary club of Madrid, the Ateneo, of which I was made a temporary member.

The story of the movement, compressed into a nutshell, is as follows. Between 1820 and 1823 a group of intellectuals set themselves to reorganize education and to encourage literature and the arts; the group was known as the Ateneo. In 1835 meetings were held in the Café del Principe, which was then in the Plaza del Angel, next door to the Teatro Español. This group became known as the Parnasillo, and among its members were numbered

the most advanced thinkers in the capital. The leading spirit was Mesonero Romanos, the "Curioso Parlante," and with him were a group of men intent on the intellectual advancement of the country. Following on the Parnasillo came the Liceo, which met at the palace of the genial and talented Duque de Rivas, and here, on 6th December 1835, the literary club, the Ateneo, was founded, the duke being the first President. A society had now been formed, which was known as the Sociedad Economica Matritense de los amigos del pais, and the question of education was very much to the fore.

The Ateneo was intended to be a club for literary and scientific people, to supply current literature so that its members should be able to keep up with the modern trend of thought, and to contain a good reference library for the use of students. It was to be progressive, propagandist, identified with world evolution and neutral in politics. It was formed for the propagation of science and the arts, to keep in touch with kindred institutions, to hold lectures and classes both for the benefit of the young and of the working classes. All these aims have been consistently kept in sight, and the Ateneo to-day is a great power for good and has a very large membership. The campaign started to improve the general system of education was ably conducted by a very remarkable man.

D. Francisco Giner de los Ríos was expelled from the University on account of his progressive opinions; nothing daunted he set quietly to work to found a school which should be absolutely independent.

In order to supply the best system of educación, he went to the educational centres of other countries, advocated international co-operation, travelling scholarships and the exchange of students. The Escuela de libre enseñanza was so successful that it was recognized and subventioned by the State in 1907, and from it sprang the system of Secondary Education known as the Junta para ampliación de Estudios. This movement was suggested by the English University Extension Scheme.

As time went on and the work developed a Centre was badly needed, not only for lecture rooms, but for rooms for the students, native and foreign, who flocked to Madrid to attend the classes, and for the University students for whom no accommodation is given in the Spanish colleges. In 1910, some land at the north-eastern extremity of the town was given to the society by the Government, and a house was erected on it for the use of students, on the understanding that the Institute was to be self-supporting. It was soon found to be too small to accommodate all those who applied for admission, and it has since been much enlarged and is now an imposing building in which over a hundred students are lodged. In connection with the Residencia are the Ladies' Residencia, the Principal of which is clever Doña María de Maeztu, an excellent boarding-school for girls, which I had the pleasure of seeing on one of my visits to Madrid, and a group of boys under fifteen. It is connected with various other Institutions, such as the Centre of Historical Studies.

I was shown over the Residencia by the Marqués

de Palomares de Duero, an influential and enthusiastic member of the Junta para ampliación de Estudios. It was a cold, clear winter day, the north wind blew and the sun shone in a cloudless sky. As we mounted up to the plateau on which the Residencia is built, it seemed as if the coldest site imaginable had been chosen, and yet, on the terrace, which looks straight out to the Sierra, the sun was so warm that some students were sitting out with their books as if the season had been more advanced. The view from the terrace is very fine. The mountains appear so much nearer than they do when seen from the town ; the intense blue of the sky and the lower reach of the Sierra make the crystal clear summits shine out more unearthly white than ever.

We were taken over the Residencia from the top to the bottom. We inspected the library, the dining-hall, the laboratories, the long white passages that have a suggestion of something monastic, and the rooms of the students, half study, half bedroom, that were said to be on the model of an English college. And I was told a great many interesting things about the various activities of the Institution. It is not only adapted for the needs of students working at the University, but includes those of men working for a degree, and for pupils, native and foreign, for whose benefit regular courses are arranged in the classrooms of the Residencia. During the summer the whole place is given up to the Course for foreigners.

I remember that I went straight from the Resi-

dencia to the Ateneo, of which I was a temporary member, and that passing from one to another made me realize what a great work those few determined men had accomplished. It also struck me forcibly that in most countries a Salon ended in nothing more substantial than the froth of good talk, but that here, in Spain, it had actually inaugurated a social revolution. It is good to know that this movement which was started by a few enthusiasts has not only received the approval of the State, but the support and co-operation of some of the most important writers of the day. To name only a few, we have D. Ramon Perez de Ayala, D. Miguel Unamuno, the sage of Salamanca, D. M. B. Cossío, D. Pedro de Repite, "Azorin" and Pio Baroja. The list is obviously incomplete.

The President of the Junta para ampliación de Estudios is the well-known D. Ramon Menéndez Pidál, who is supported by a band of prominent men at the head of the various sections. The most able of these is Professor José Castillejo, the author of a book on English education, a man of great singleness and strength of purpose, with an enthusiasm that burns like a flame. Señor Castillejo is particularly interested in England and in establishing an Anglo-Spanish entente that ought to have a far-reaching result. It is hoped to establish a Centre in London with a small Residence for Spanish students, under the direction of the Junta and with the help of an Anglo-Spanish Committee. Meanwhile the work of international *rapprochement*, in which the Spanish educational authorities are speci-

ally interested, is going on well from their side and with but little encouragement from ours. It is true that crowds of eager students attended Professor Altamira's brilliant lectures on contemporary modern history, delivered in Spanish at the London University; it is true also that there is a great increase in the number of students desirous of learning Spanish, but our Government has not, as yet, met the offer of the Spanish authorities to increase educational facilities, in the same spirit in which they were offered. France and America have been quicker to see the advantages to be derived by a closer connection with Spain than has our own Country, in spite of the fact that we have great interests in Spanish-speaking lands as regards our commerce.

I cannot conclude these few notes on Anglo-Spanish relations without a word concerning the Spanish Club in Cavendish Square. This is not only a social Club for Spaniards residing in London, it is also a centre of activity for all Spanish interests, and the home of the Anglo-Spanish Society, which has now a permanent office there. As long as Spain is represented by the actual Ambassador, Don Alfonso Merry del Val, who so often presides over the interesting meetings held in this Spanish Centre, any scheme for a literary or educational co-operation between England and Spain will be ably supported.

## CHAPTER XXI

### MUSINGS IN A LIBRARY

THE Ateneo has moved about a good deal since it was founded in 1835 ; the present building is in the narrow Calle del Prado, which runs from the Plaza de las Cortes to the Plaza del Angel. It consists of an entrance hall, some club rooms on the ground floor, a long gallery, on the walls of which hang the portraits of distinguished Athenians, and a theatre, which is often full "to capacity" when some interesting lecture is pending. A staircase leads up to the excellent library where I passed many peaceful and happy hours. After the hum of talk downstairs, the silence once you are inside the library doors is striking. I used to think it the quietest place in Madrid !

The library consists of two rooms, one of which is square and high, with tier upon tier of books, and with little iron galleries encircling the walls ; the other is long and narrow. In both are serried rows of desks, usually occupied by serried rows of students. So popular is the library that it is often difficult to procure a place, although it is open from nine in the morning till twelve at night.

The morning is the best time to study, or the hours between one o'clock and three, a time when all sensible people go out to lunch. At such a time you can, as it were, leave the hard, high road and get off on the grass; you can leave the pile of instructive works which you are poring over so conscientiously, and wander round by the card index to find something entertaining. For the library contains all sorts and conditions of books in all languages.

If Spanish fiction attracts you, you will find a vast field awaiting you, so vast that you will be puzzled where to begin. As my knowledge of Spanish fiction was extremely partial and un-systematic, I sought a book about books to light me on my way. I had of course read Mr. Fitz Maurice Kelly's admirable book on Spanish literature, as every student is bound to do, and I had also read other works by English writers. What I sought was a Spanish record of the national fiction from *Amadis de Gaula* and the rhymed dialogue of the *Celestina* to the latest novel of Pio Baroja. What struck me the most, apart from the small quantity of such critical studies, was that they seemed written from a different standpoint. They are occupied with the larger issues of school, whether romantic, realist, naturalist; they deal rather with intention than with the special means used in conveying that intention. Style is mentioned by the way; construction more seldom. That passionate love of pattern in the written word, that economy of phrase and that architectural

building up of the framework of a novel that characterizes the best work in France and England is not appreciated. The Spanish writer is, before all things, an improvisatore, a poet. He writes as he speaks, as he is inspired, and his style is part of his inspiration. No doubt the French influence has, insensibly, led many modern writers in the direction of incision and crispness of phrase, and this is also to be attributed to the study of their own classics. Although the Spanish novelists, like the French, often choose psychological themes as the plot of the novel, they are more in sympathy with English fiction, in that they love to pierce the veil that divides us from the infinite and also in their sense of humour. But, with it all, they are intensely national, or even regional.

It is almost impossible to appreciate modern Spanish writers without throwing back to the classics, partly because of the form, but chiefly because it is founded on and bound up with tradition, pride of race and patriotism. Much has been written about the waves of foreign influence that have, from time to time, come to bear on the native production ; what strikes a casual observer is the drastic manner in which Spain has thrown them off after she has taken what she needs. The fear of seeming to have adopted foreign style or substance has often urged writers to the other extreme ; the long struggle between Spaniard and Moor, the impulse towards French art and French letters when the French Bourbons first arrived on the scene, the many vicissitudes through which the

nation had passed, all conspired to push native genius towards the delineation of native types, of native tendencies and of the scenery of the plains and the mountains of Spain. Added to this desire to portray people and things that should give a native flavour to their literature and that should reproduce that *sel espagnol*, or national humour, the writers naturally went to the peasant class for their drama. The upper classes were more cosmopolitan, the lower had kept their racial character intact. Again, the naturalistic school demanded crude passions, strong colour, misery in all its phases, while the older picaresquè novels, which were being again studied by the modern writers, excelled in delineating the vagabonds of the town and the countryside. In their search for local colour, the writers came up against the dialects of the country folk, and these were introduced into their novels with enthusiasm.

It is well known that a strong national sentiment has inspired some of the best literature known to us ; it sets forth the soul of a country, it paints the mentality of a people. But, desirable as this is, it is also a disadvantage when persisted in too constantly, for it seldom is cosmopolitan in sympathy. Isolated masterpieces, like *Don Quixote*, for instance, have appealed to the whole world, presenting universal problems, but, for the most part, the Spanish novelists have preferred to keep within the limits of their own country or of some special region that appeals to their sympathies.

And so it remains a fact that the greater part



TYPICAL COSTUMES. RAMON DE ZUBIAURRE



of modern Spanish fiction is not, in spite of its undeniable attractions, translated into other languages.

Blasco Ibañez has left the charmed circle with the *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, but his action has been criticized by other writers. Pio Baroja journeys to other climes, taking his preoccupations with him ; he is one of the most interesting of the modern writers. As regards society or politics, little is written. Once I ventured to ask a literary man why no great Society novel was written, and I shall never forget the expression of pained surprise with which he regarded me. "Write about our aristocracy ?" he said. "But what could be said about them ?" It was in vain that I suggested that they have hearts and livers, tragedies and temptations like other people, that, psychologically, the effect of catastrophe or good fortune on educated individuals was more subtle and amusing than it was on the uneducated. In vain. He shook his head, and we changed the conversation.

Again, this tendency to write of the peasant class, so conspicuous in many modern writers, is linked on to the past. To understand Pio Baroja you must read Cervantes, to whose writing that of the modern novelist has been compared. Cervantes passed, involuntarily and probably most unwillingly, much of his life amongst vagabonds, so Pio Baroja lived for eight years in a bakery. Ricardo León, who is a fervent admirer of Fray Luis de León, that great stylist, and who is inspired by the history and the traditions of his country, can be

best appreciated after reading something historic and heroic like the story of the Cid.

Let us consider, for a moment, this story of the Cid. It is part history, part legend ; which is which, is quite beside the mark, for the hero has become the national hero of Spain, and represents the ideals, the aspirations and the striking contradictions of the race.

Ruy Diaz de Bivar was born about 1026 ; when quite young he married a cousin of King Alfonso of Castile, Jimena, daughter of the Count of Oviedo. As a young warrior he was in high favour with the King, and earned the title of Champion or Campeodor, by his valour in single combat. It was after one of his great victories that he was accused of keeping too much of his booty for himself ; and then the trouble began. He was exiled and went, with a troop of followers, to the Court of the Moorish Emir of Saragossa, whom he served faithfully until recalled by the King of Castile. After a few years spent at the Court of Castile the old accusations were raked up again, and, this time, he was not only banished but all his possessions were confiscated. Nothing daunted, Ruy Diaz, with his beloved wife and his three daughters, as well as with a mixed throng of Moorish and Christian followers, left Castile and went into exile. He then began to carry on a guerrilla warfare with the Almoravides, those fierce tribes from the African desert who were everywhere gaining ground against the original invaders.

So far the story is, I believe, historical, though

there have been writers who have pretended that not only are these facts unvouched for in ancient records but that the Cid himself is a myth ! These incredulous people must surely have been convinced of the reality of the Cid's epic story when, quite recently, after a lapse of eight hundred years, his remains, with those of his wife Jimena, were taken from the monastery of San Pedro de Cardena and laid to rest in the Cathedral of Burgos.

Ruy Diaz was beloved by the Moors, who called him the Cid, from Sidi or Lord ; he was adored by the Christians, who looked on him as their saviour. He was always victorious, the man who " was born in a happy hour." His mighty deeds became the epic of the Reconquest, and he himself became a national hero, a symbol of all the chivalrous qualities that stand for the Spanish ideal. The end of his career is lost in romance. He overran Valencia and took the city, in which he lived as a sort of uncrowned King to the end of his days. When he was dying and the town was threatened by the enemy, he is said to have seen a vision and to have been told that his dead body would win yet another victory after his spirit had passed beyond. And so it happened. After he died he was strapped on to his faithful horse, and his sword Tizona was strapped to his dead hand, and so, once more, the Cid led his troops to victory. His wife did actually keep the enemy at bay for three years before she took the body of the Cid for interment to San Pedro de Cardena.

Even when shorn of miracles, the story of the Cid

is fascinating ; as it comes down to us in the poem of the Cid it is irresistible, partly because, with all his heroism, the Cid is delightfully human. As a careful father arranging his daughters' marriages, as an avenging force descending on those unpleasant sons-in-law, or as a crafty financier when he deluded the Jews by giving them a trunk full of sand instead of the promised gold, the Cid of romance is unique. And the Poem of the Cid, which has only been discovered in an ancient copy of the twelfth-century original, is one of the jewels of literature. This gem was for long neglected in Spain, and it was not until after its publication in 1779 that Southey translated it into English and brought it to the notice of the world. He declared that nothing so Homeric in sentiment had been read since the Iliad had appeared.

After reading the *Poéma del Cid*, we shall better understand the emotion with which a cultivated writer like Ricardo León looks out over the stretches of country where so many hand-to-hand fights for freedom have taken place. In his *El Amor de los Amores*—a story so typically Spanish that it could have been written in no other country—he writes :

“ Broad lands of Castile ! The eagle eyes of thy Captains, gazing from under the waving plumes of their helmets at the spreading plains, were cheered by the sight and the sound of the horses' hoofs resounding with rhythmic thud. Their flesh sweated under the heavy armour, but their hearts, like arrows, pierced the cuirass and reached the serenity of the skies.

“ Can we not still hear the speech of those rude warriors of the golden century, Alvar Fañez, Martín Antolínez, Pero Bermúdez, singing the ancient fable of the Campeador in all its barbaric majesty ? Can we not, in imagination, feel the shock of those walls of flesh, fighting ‘ breast to breast,’ and hear the clatter of the coats of mail and the hoarse gasping of many throats and the joyous neighing of the horses ?

“ See there, on the plain, a great cloud of dust arises ; and there—look well—are the sons of the golden Tagus, of the Douro, of the Arlanza and the Pisuerga, *reliquias antiguas de la sangre goda*, ‘ ancient residue of the Gothic race ’ ; those who were clothed in coat of mail and crowned with spearheads, a legion of labourers, warriors, kings, vassals, nobles, commoners, the wonderful Castilian democracy, the most wonderful democracy in the world ! Helos, helos, por do vienen ! ‘ See where they come,’ Bernardo del Carpio and the Conde Fernán González, Mudarra the Bastard and the six Infantes of Lara ; see them galloping over the rolling plains of the Romancero ; their swords are girt, their cuirasses are before their breasts, their lances are poised. The earth shakes and the strong arms tremble with impatience and rage. Grandees of Castile and León, sturdy men inured to hardship, you who gained blazons and broad lands at the cost of the blood in your veins, race of the goshawk, ancestors of a great nation ; hail ! ”

We might read on, but it is already three o’clock

and the students are pouring into their accustomed places. Once more the library assumes its business-like aspect, and the Cid, with the Infantes and the horsemen, gallops away over the dusty plains of the imagination and is lost to view.

## CHAPTER XXII

### A GREAT WOMAN WRITER

**I**MET the late Condesa de Pardo Bazan at a lunch party at the Ritz soon after my arrival in Madrid, and I can see her now as she stood there by the side of my host. She was short and strongly built, her fine head was crowned with snow-white hair, her piercing dark eyes gleamed from under straight, strongly marked brows. Without any pretension to good looks, there was something very impressive about her, a sensation of reserved strength, of self-confidence and of dignity. Under it all, it was easy to imagine the flame that burned within. The position occupied by the Condesa was so unique in Spain, and her sudden death, which occurred only a few months afterwards, left such a blank in the social as well as the literary world that a few pages concerning her career will not be out of place. They are, alas, but a poor substitute for the "impressions" that she had promised to contribute to this book.

The luncheon was given by the Marqués de Castel Bravo, better known in the literary world as D. Alvaro de Alcalá Galiano, a writer who should be better appreciated in England. He is not only a

fearless and satiric essayist and novelist, but he is also a stylist whose prose is clear and lucid. He should be remembered by us as one whose outspoken championship of the Allies was expressed in books written at a time when the clouds hung lowest over the cause of right and justice.

Besides my host and his charming sister, Señorita María Teresa de Alcalá Galiano, the party included Señorita de Casa Calderón, the Marqués de Valdiglesias, the pleasant and cultivated editor of the *Época*, the Marqués de Figueroa, a poet and descriptive writer, and D. Emilio María de Torres, private secretary of H.M. the King. I appreciate enormously the kindness of the Marqués de Castel Bravo in giving this most interesting party for my benefit, and only wish that I could write down here the bright and amusing talk that made it memorable. Failing that, I must try to give a short account of the life and work of the remarkable woman writer whom I then met for the first time.

Emilia Pardo Bazan was born in Coruña, the capital of Galicia, in 1850; when only sixteen she married D. José Quiroga, by whom she had three children. Her early married life was spent in travel, in wintering in Madrid, in returning to Galicia in summer. This wandering life did not induce study, and the future novelist appears to have settled in the country in order to work in her father's library. The Conde de Pardo Bazan had always encouraged his daughter's literary tastes, which had shown themselves at a very early age, and no doubt he helped her with the course of history and literature

which she mapped out for herself, so acquiring that solid knowledge which was to be the foundation of her future reputation. In 1876 she gained a prize for her critical study of the writings of her compatriot, Padre Maestro Feijoo, which was published in the following year. Her first novel saw the light in 1879, her second in 1881, when already the ferment was abroad that was to affect all her after work.

In these early days of her career Doña Emilia, as she was afterwards called, must have had an uphill struggle. The condition of Spain, politically and socially, had not been favourable to literature for many years. She was born when Queen Isabel II was on the throne ; the year of her marriage was that of the abdication of the Queen. Subsequent years had been marked by the short reign and abdication of Amadeo of Savoy, of the interim Republic and of the Restoration of the Bourbons in 1874. During these troubled times the national literary production had been at a low ebb. Some great names there were, but they were linked with the past rather than forerunners of the literary Renaissance that was to come.

In considering this Renaissance and the part played in it by Doña Emilia, we are up against certain difficulties. The writers before the group which we must try to consider were influenced by the romantic school, especially by the works of Victor Hugo, of Walter Scott and of Byron. How did this new realistic school arise ? Was it imported from France or did it throw back to the novels of

Cervantes and the native picaresque school, which had, in its day, influenced the literature of Europe? The answer appears to lie in a compromise. The influence came from the great school of French novelists no doubt; but, the impulse once given, the tendency was to model the new books rather on the older school. Or, at least, so it appears to a casual observer who has no pretensions to pose as a critic. If you study the interesting and widely instructive *History of the Novel in Spain*, by that distinguished writer, D. Andrés González Blanco, you will see that he credits Fernán Caballero with being the first to adopt realistic methods. I confess that this judgment surprised me at first, for I had not considered this pleasant writer in such a light, but on reading further I understood what was meant. When writers of the romantic school were composing books with historical characters treated from the imaginative point of view, or of wild adventures in imaginary countries, Fernán went to real life for her studies. She wrote of everyday life and of everyday people. It is surely curious that, just as a foreign painter revealed Spanish art to the Spanish people, another foreigner should have started that movement that was to have such important results on Spanish literature.

Cecilia Böhl de Faber, a cosmopolitan German, who was born in Switzerland and came to live in Spain, wrote her first book in German, her second in French and the remainder in Spanish. She never wrote the language of her adopted country well, but her books were so fresh in spirit and in treatment

that they interested the public and influenced future literature.

Fernán Caballero died in 1877, the year in which Doña Emilia published her first critical study; she belonged to an earlier generation, in spite of her advanced methods. When Doña Emilia began her career as a novelist, she was brought in contact with a group of distinguished men who had, as yet, not achieved their best work, and with some who had already arrived at the summit of their endeavour. Amongst the latter we must give first place to Juan Valera, poet, critic and diplomat, whose *Pepita Jimenez* had attracted the attention of foreign critics in 1874, and Pedro de Alarcón, a picaresque writer whose celebrated *Three-Cornered Hat* had been published in the same year. José María de Pereda, one of the most distinguished writers of his time, who was born in 1833, had published, between 1864 and 1871, those "Mountain Scenes" which were described with a crude realism that was a distinct step forward, but which was, nevertheless, far more a continuation of the native school, so long abandoned, than a copy of the modern French realists. His work has been described as "local in detail, but universal in type." Benito Pérez Galdós, born in the Canaries in 1845, came to Madrid in 1864, to study law, which he gave up for journalism and subsequently for literature. He is not only esteemed a great writer in Spain, but the great national writer, the Apostle of modern literature. He was imbued with the spirit of realism and he applied it to history. He wanted

his historical studies to be alive, and so he gave them the form used in the *Episodios Nacionales*. In these sketches we find a title that suggests a great name or a great event ; we are often surprised to be introduced to several quite unimportant individuals, seen against a background of history, enveloped in an atmosphere of the times. From these Episodes, often unintelligible to a foreigner, especially if taken up at hazard, the modern Spaniards have learned to live again through a stirring period of their history.

Galdós published his first great novel in 1870.

Each one of these writers was following out his own individual destiny when Doña Emilia began her career as a novelist, and to none of them did she look for inspiration. Armando Palacio Valdés, who was then noted as a critic, did not write his first novel, *El Señorito Octavio*, which hardly gave the promise of his prime, until 1881. In the preface to his masterpiece, *La Hermana de San Sulpicio*, he distinctly states that he only belonged to the realistic school with reservations.

Doña Emilia belonged to the realistic, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say the naturalistic school. Although not a follower of Zola, whose work she criticizes, she certainly learned much from him, without recognizing him for a master, as Blasco Ibañez did at a later time. In admiring and adopting the new methods of the French School, she incurred the displeasure of the critics, who resented anything in style that they could call “Franciscado.” But it took more than that to

daunt Doña Emilia. At a time when very few women were writing at all, she nailed her colours to the mast, chose her literary creed and stuck to it in the face of much opposition. In her novels, and still more in her polemical writings, she showed herself a champion of the new school. It is the attitude that this intrepid woman took up at a critical stage of literature, when so much was in the melting-pot, as well as her struggle against sex disqualifications, more marked in Spain than in other countries, that make her story so interesting. Regardless of criticism, she took what she wanted from French sources, from Daudet and the Goncourts rather than from Zola, grafted the foreign shoot on to the sturdy old tree of the Spanish racial instinct and started the series of novels that have made her famous.

The young writer soon made her mark, and was felt as a new and potent influence in the world of fiction and in that of criticism. She had the spirit of literary adventure joined to strength of mind and tenacity of purpose; with a fine historical sense, she was yet a hero worshipper and had a vein of exalted mysticism, which showed itself later in her life of St. Francis of Assisi. Her early studies had given her a sound basis on which to work; her style was simple and distinctive, her vocabulary extensive. She is always credited by Spanish writers with having purified and strengthened her native tongue. As her earlier novels succeeded each other, and as her brilliant fighting articles appeared in the *Época*, under the title of

“La Cuestión Palpitante,” the literary world awoke to the fact that the new writer had something to say and knew how that something should be said.

The first of her books to make a sensation was *La Tribuna*, a study of life in a tobacco factory ; it was followed by the finest of the long series, *Los Pasos de Ulloa* and *La Madre Naturaleza*, published in 1886 and 1887. After establishing herself in Madrid she wrote two stories of love and life in the Capital, *Insolación* and *Morriña*. From the former we may take a description of the feast of San Isidro, the patron Saint of Madrid, an occasion when the townspeople make merry, combining a pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Saint in the chapel on the farther bank of the river with a fair, or romeria, which lasts a fortnight. It opens on the 15th of May.

It is quite evident from the following description that Doña Emilia comes from the north of Spain and not from sun-steeped Andalusia. Her heroine is speaking :

“The ground round San Isidro rises in a series of bare hills ; it is a sandy desert now invaded by a swarm of people amongst whom you may look in vain for a single countryman, seeing only soldiers, women and vagabonds, a low and rascally lot ; and instead of vegetation there are thousands of sheds and booths where trash is sold that will disappear once the Fair is over never to be seen again. Here are whistles adorned with silver-paper leaves and absurd roses ; Virgins painted

emerald green, cobalt and vermillion ; medals and scapularies equally brilliant in colouring ; pottery and earthenware ; coarse figures of bullfighters and picadors ; short-necked jugs of quaint shape ; puppets and marionettes with the heads of Martos, Sagasta or Castelar—Ministers for two farthings—modelled figures of the pickpockets of La Gran Via ; and, by the side of images of the blessed St. Isidro, figures which—heavens !—I pretended not to see.

“ Besides the sun which melts your brain and the dust which covers you, there are colours so vivid and metallic that it is enough to give you a sick headache. If I look about me too much it hurts my eyes. The piled-up oranges are like a pyramid of fire, the dates shine like dark garnets, the scorched chick peas and peanuts are like grains of gold ; in the flower booths are only carnations that are gold or crimson as the blood of a bull, or rose as brilliant as the clouds at sunset. The scent that comes from this mass of carnations is not strong enough to drown the smell of pancakes frying in oil, which sticks in your throat and leaves an unendurable tickling sensation. And, as I have said, there is not a colour to be seen that is not violent. The uniforms of the soldiers, the mantons of the girls, the blue of the skies, the yellow of the earth, the red stripe on the old men’s cloaks and the swings, painted Indian red with indigo stripes . . . and then, the music, the twanging of the guitars, the insufferable strumming noise of the piano organs which deafen you with the Quick

Step of Cadiz, reverberating from thirty different parts of the Fair—*Vi-va España !*”

From this time on, Doña Emilia was always in the limelight ; praised to the skies by some, abused by others, her work was usually regarded as controversial, but never as insignificant. Together with long novels she now produced a continuous stream of original work—short stories, criticisms, regional books such as *De mi Tierra*, pieces for the theatre and articles for the press. And apart from all this literary work, she made a unique position for herself in Madrid. She liked society and found time to go about a good deal ; she was foremost in any movement favouring the advancement of women ; whatever she did she put her whole heart into it, grudging neither time nor trouble. She was a woman of strong feelings, of strong prejudices even, and she was always true to herself and her convictions. Whether writing the life of a Saint, or compiling a book of ancient Spanish cookery, she put into it all the enthusiasm which she managed to keep intact during her long and busy life.

When I met her in 1921, the Condesa de Pardo Bazan, as she had become when the King bestowed the title on her in 1908, had already accomplished her life’s work, but she seemed quite strong and vigorous and as intellectually keen as ever. She had then a total of forty-one volumes in the edition of her collected works, besides a smaller edition of eleven books which she had contributed to the *Biblioteca de la Mujer*, which she edited. As a

writer of short stories she was at her best, and she confessed, in the preface to a selection of these, that she had written something approaching five hundred. In 1910 she was placed on the Committee of Public Instruction, and in 1916 was appointed to a Chair at the Central University, where she held classes on literature. But the greatest honour, that of being elected a member of the Spanish Academy, was refused her on account of sex disqualification.

There are three occasions when my memories of the Condesa stand out. The first was at the luncheon party already mentioned, when there were so many pleasant people and the talk was general ; the second was in the house of the well-known Galician writer, D. Gustavo Morales, who lives, with his daughters, in a flat in the same block as the Condesa. We had inspected the pictures, the miniatures and the Cabinets full of bibelots, collected by the novelist or inherited by him, when the Condesa arrived. We were soon seated round a tea-table, and I had a more intimate impression of the writer than I had before. She talked well and easily on any subject that came up, and I remember that, while the rest of us had tea, she was provided with a glass of clear, foaming ale, into which she put a liberal allowance of powdered sugar. The third time was in her own flat one Sunday, not long before I left Madrid, on which occasion she honoured me by giving a luncheon party for my benefit.

The Condesa owned a beautiful country house in

Galicia, which she had inherited from her father, and the flat in which she lived in Madrid had somehow an old-world flavour. It was quite unlike any other house that I saw in Madrid, and had an atmosphere of its own. On the walls were family portraits and tapestries, and the furniture was dignified. In contrast with the other rooms, I have a recollection of the dining-room as being very light and white and cheerful. The Condesa was an excellent hostess, and it must have been quite late before we broke up. After lunch she was talking eagerly about her projected book on Hernán Cortés. In the discussion her eyes shone with enthusiasm, and she radiated exaltation and mysticism when she spoke of the spiritual side of that sturdy hero's mission to the Mexicans and the boldness with which he carried the cross into the stronghold of the heathen. I little thought when I said good-bye to her that she would so soon pass over.

The Condesa kept her literary activity to the last. A few days before her sudden death, she was asked if she would contribute four short stories a year to the *Prensa Grafica*, and she was already engaged on one of these when she was seized with an attack of influenza from which she never recovered. On the day she was taken ill, Saturday, 7th May 1921, she wrote her last article and sent it to "A.B.C."; on the following Monday some alarm was felt about her condition, and on Thursday, at twelve o'clock precisely, she breathed her last.

A striking figure has passed out of Spain, whether considered from the literary, the public or the social

standpoint, and the greatest woman writer in Spain will have left a blank in Madrid that will be hard to fill. "Death is a great artist," she wrote once, speaking of Valera, "and with his marble finger he models and paints for immortality." With these words of hers we must leave her to the judgment of posterity.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE CHURCHES AND THE CONVENTS

THE Madrileños—or rather the Madrileñas, for it affects the women more than the men—are lucky in that their churches are more suited for places of worship than for museums where works of art are admired by wandering tourists. Unlike the show places of Spain, where majestic cathedrals form the most conspicuous features of the town, Madrid has as yet only the so-called Cathedral, the ugly church of San Isidro, until the new white marble pillars that stand on the already finished crypt near the royal palace are covered in by walls and roof. The cathedral that is being erected is Romanesque in design, the architect being the Marqués de Cubas ; it is dedicated to Santa María de la Almudena and is on the site of the oldest church in Madrid.

Anyone going the round of the churches with a view to architecture will be disappointed. There are only two Gothic churches, the beautiful little Capilla del Obispo and the church of San Jerónimo el Real, which dominates the Plaza de Cibeles and the Paseo del Prado. The interior is not impressive, and it is chiefly interesting historically, though

there is a good example of the art of Barocchio in "The Dying Christ."

This church, which occupies a commanding position and can be seen with advantage from the Calle de Alcalá, was built in 1503 and restored in 1879 and again in 1882. The Parliament has sat here on various occasions, the first being in 1528 and the last in 1833, a few months before the death of King Ferdinand VII, who had here abolished the Salic Law in favour of his daughter Isabel. Here, too, the heir to the throne used to come to take the oath ; one of the youngest to do so was little Prince Baltasar Carlos, whose magnificent costume on the occasion is described by the old chroniclers, who also note that his two uncles drove him up the aisle in leading strings. The last event of importance was the marriage of the present King and Queen.

The Capilla del Obispo is so called because it was founded by Gutierrez de Vargas, Bishop of Plasencia, on the first tomb of San Isidro, whose remains were lately removed to the church of that name. Built about 1520, the chapel is a beautiful example of Gothic architecture with a Renaissance or Plateresque retable by Francisco Giralte and Juan de Villondo. The fine alabaster tombs of the Bishop and his parents are by Giralte, who is also responsible for the beautifully carved oak doors. The church was badly restored in 1901, the walls being decorated with white and gold. On Good Friday some wonderful old painted cloths are exhibited.

We are now in the old part of the town and stand on historic ground. The Capilla del Obispo backs

on to the church of San Andrés, which used to be the Court chapel of Ferdinand and Isabella, who lived in the house close by which now belongs to the Duque de Infantado. Some say that in this house the great Cardinal Cisneros held a meeting with those who wished to depose him from his post of Regent. Asked by whose power he held his office, he flung open the window, pointed to a company of soldiers drawn up with their guns below, and said that he held it by command of the late King and by the force of the troops. Whether true or not, it is characteristic of the indomitable will of the man who succeeded in holding his post until the new King, the Emperor Charles v, who was then in Flanders, came to claim his heritage.

San Andrés is a seventeenth-century building, with a chapel dedicated to San Isidro, which is elaborately decorated with carvings in marble in low relief and with paintings. Some of the best works by Carreño and others have been removed. From the steps of the Capilla del Obispo a pretty and very typical view can be obtained.

Passing down the Carrera de San Francisco, you come to the church of San Francisco el Grande, a circular church with a dome said to have been copied from the dome of the Pantheon at Rome. This church, which is attached to a monastery, and which was intended to be a national Pantheon, was built between 1761 and 1784. The bronze doors are sculptured by A. Varela in the Renaissance style. The interior consists of a nave ending in an apse in which is placed the High Altar and behind which is

the monastery ; on either side of the nave are six chapels, each lighted by a small cupola. In the second chapel to the left is the altar-piece by Goya representing St. Francis, the execution of which gave him so much pleasure because the fact of his receiving the commission proved that he was getting to the top of his profession. It is very difficult to see any of the pictures on account of the cross-lights ; the decoration is very much overdone, the gilding being very heavy and without artistic design. The monastery is far more interesting, with its dark passages hung with pictures and the beautiful stalls from El Paular and El Parral.

There is something interesting to be seen in nearly all the churches. San Pedro, in the Calle del Nunzio, has the only Mozarabe square tower in Madrid, San Andrés de los Portugueses, in the Corredora de San Pablo, has frescoes by Carreño and F. Rizi, San Antonio Abad has the picture by Goya, executed in his last manner. San Isidro el Real, dedicated to the "labourer" Saint who died in 1170, has some great pictures by F. Rizi, sculptures by M. Pereira, the Immaculate Conception by Alonso Cano and an Ecce Homo by Morales. San Andrés de los Flamencos has the altar-piece by Rubens ; the Church of the Sacrament has a fourteenth-century painting ; the dome of Santo Tomás is a masterpiece by the two sons of the baroque architect, Churiguera ; San Ginés, a fashionable church in the Calle del Arenal, has a statue of Christ by Alfonso Vergaz in the chapel of the Holy Sacrament and that of Jesus at Calvary by Alonso Cano. San Sebastian is

notable from its literary associations and because various interesting people are buried there ; the Basilica of Our Lady of Atocha is also interesting, rather because of its historical associations, dating from the earliest days of the Christian occupation, than because of the modern Pantheon which is still in process of erection.

In order to visit San Antonio de la Florida, you must make quite a pilgrimage. You leave the palace behind you, skirting the gardens, you pass the northern station and walk down the Paseo de la Florida, which runs along by the river. Here you are in a poor and not very attractive quarter ; little shops, mostly grocers poetically named ultramarinos in Spain, and innumerable cafés succeed each other, while, between the gaps in the street, you see the river banks converted into a huge laundry. No doubt the long avenue looks more attractive when the trees are out ; on a wet day, when the road is a lake of mud, as it was on my last visit, it is wiser to take the tram.

When you at last arrive at the tiny chapel, you cannot fail to admire Goya's charming angels, all pale colour and silver tones, realistic and very human, who smile down on you with a divine indifference.

The church of the Commendatores de Santiago stands in the Plaza of the same name near the Calle de San Bernardo, a busy street in which is the University and which ends in the Glorieta de San Bernardo where, in days gone by, the stake was built up to burn the victims of the Inquisition. It

was then outside the walls of the town. In the church are the statues of eight Kings who were Grand Masters of the Order and Luca Giordano's picture of the battle of Clavijo. The Sisters of the Order wear a black habit with the great red cross of Santiago that Velazquez wore.

These military Orders had great power in their day. Those of Santiago and Alcántara were founded in León in the twelfth century; the knights of Santiago bound themselves to defend the frontiers of Extremadura and the pilgrims who went to the shrine of Santiago from the Moors, those of Alcántara defended the country as far as Salamanca. Another military Order set up, like the other two, in the twelfth century and, like them, having a double organization, military and religious, was the Order of Calatrava. This Order originated in Castile during the one year's reign of King Sancho III; unlike the others it was founded by two monks, the Abbot Raimundo and Brother Diego Velazquez, who defended the fortress of Calatrava against the Moors with the help of a body of soldiers. They afterwards founded an Order which received the sanction of Pope Alexander III in 1157.

In 1623 the nuns of this military Order came to Madrid from Almonacid de Zurita, and nuns of the Order of Franciscan Clares were joined to them, living in one community. Their church in the Calle de Alcalá is a large and imposing one, which is always well attended. This is especially the case on Holy Thursday, when the Knights of the Order attend Mass and take a certain part in the

Celebration. I shall never forget the impressive and picturesque sight that this church presented on that occasion. Down the centre of the church were the Knights in their mediæval dress, with the plumed hats and the flowing cloaks of their Order ; and all around, as far as the eye could see, were women wearing the national head-dress of Spain, the becoming mantilla. It seemed as if all the prettiest and best-bred women had congregated there. I suppose that there were some men, but the greater part of the huge congregation were ladies whose high combs, finely worked tortoiseshell or jet, were sometimes set in diamonds and supported long mantillas of the finest lace. The music was beautiful, the service impressive ; when it was finished the congregation swarmed out into the sunlit streets to find a crowd that filled the wide pavements and the inevitable photographers and even the cinema fiend busy with his camera.

There are still a great many convents in Madrid, although so many have been removed or suppressed. The Queens of Spain had a great fancy for erecting convents in which they could retire when they were weary of the world or when they became widows and were forced, by Court etiquette, to end their days in a cloister. The latest of these is that built, at enormous expense, by Queen Barbara of Braganza, wife of Ferdinand vi, on the steep slope of the present Calle de Doña Barbara de Braganza, just off the Calle Genova. Perhaps inspired by the vast scale of the monuments of former Kings, the Queen planned her convent on generous lines. The

building, which was intended to contain a school for girls of good family as well as a place of refuge for herself, was designed by René Carlier. The façade towards the street was all huge blocks of granite, the garden front was more ornate, while the interior was adorned with sculpture and paintings. The Madrileños celebrated her undertaking with the sarcastic couplet :

“ *Barbara reina, barbara obra,  
Barbara obra, barbaro gusto.*”

The convent was latterly used as a Law Court, but was partially burned in 1915 ; it is now in course of reconstruction. The church, which is still in use, is approached by a flight of steps leading to a pretty terrace garden. Inside are the tombs of the founders, Ferdinand VI and Doña Barbara de Braganza, by F. Sabatini.

In the little Plaza de las Descalzas is another convent of an earlier date, founded by a royal lady, where the nuns live in great seclusion and where the rule of clausura prevents the art lover from seeing many things of beauty and of historic interest. In the Conventual Church, which is open to the public during a few hours in the morning, can be seen the tomb of the Infanta Juana, daughter of Charles V, by Pompeo Leoni, and her portrait by Antonio Moro, also G. Becerra’s St. Sebastian and St. John. But if we wish to learn anything of the interior of the convent and the treasures that it contains, we must refer to Don Elias Tormó’s interesting brochure, *En las Descalzas Reales*, and also to the lives of Mena y Medrano and of Berruguete

by Don Ricardo Oruete, who accompanied him on his quest. In order to obtain permission to enter the convent and to inspect its treasures, these two distinguished men had to go through all sorts of formalities. The Junta para ampliación de estudios succeeded at last in obtaining the three permits that were necessary, high ecclesiastical, Court and Conventual. When this book of Señor Tormó's has been read, and when the authoritative works of Señor Oruete have been studied, it is evident that there is a mass of objects of art hidden away in Spain that we can never see. This fact is brought out very clearly by Mrs. Arthur Byne in her accounts of many unfruitful journeys taken to see certain Rejas and artesonado ceilings which were hidden from secular eyes by the law of clausura.

The convent was founded by the widowed Princess of Portugal, daughter of Charles v, in the house where she was born. It was already a palace when the Emperor took it as a country-house and had coats of arms other than those of the Royal house in the great room known as the "Sala de los reyes," proving that it had been lived in by some great family before it was owned by Charles. The Infanta Juana was joined in her retreat by her widowed sister, the Empress of Germany, and her daughter, who became a nun of the Order, and was known as Sor Margarita de la Cruz. The royal ladies were joined by the illegitimate daughter of the Cardinal Infante Fernando, Sor Mariana de la Cruz, by the daughter of the Emperor Rodolfo II, and by the illegitimate daughter

of Don Juan of Austria and the daughter of the painter Ribera. Sor Catalina Maria de Este was another of the royal nuns.

Doña Juana, the foundress, was rather a remarkable woman. She was born in 1536, married to Prince Juan of Portugal in 1552 ; left a widow in 1554, she returned to Spain the same year and governed the country for her absent brother for five years. She was a just and good ruler, but so shy and reserved, or perhaps so proud, that she never appeared in public without a veil. When the foreign Ambassadors protested, and declared that they did not know if it were really she who received them, she used to raise her veil once, so that all might see, saying, "I am the Princess." After this concession to public duty she veiled her face once more.

It must have been a relief to the Princess when she retired to her convent in 1559, where she could devote herself to religious observances, and yet be in a little family colony of which she was the moving spirit. It was in this way that the convent became the favourite resort of the Royal family and the Court, and the habit arose of frequent visits that continued long after she had passed away, which she did in 1573, at the age of thirty-seven. She died in the Escorial, but her body was brought back to be buried in her own chapel. Her sister Maria long outlived her, dying in the convent at the age of seventy-six. The Empress was the great granddaughter, granddaughter, daughter and wife of Emperors and the mother of two successive

Emperors, but her happiest days were probably spent in the seclusion of the Convent of the Descalzas Reales.

Sor Margarita de la Cruz, "The Infanta of the Descalzas," lived there up to old age, and was a great character. Her advice was often asked by members of the Royal family, and she was much respected for her piety. There are several portraits of her in the convent, in one of which she is represented in her coffin.

The convent, with its church, its hospital, its chaplains' quarters and other dependencies, occupies a whole block with gardens in the centre. We read that the Sala de los reyes is hung with portraits of the Royal family, that a fresco representing Philip IV, his wife and two children, is painted on the wall as you ascend the fine staircase, that the chapels and cloisters contain admirable pictures, together with many copies or inferior works, and that there are masterpieces by some of the most famous Spanish sculptors. It is this last point that should be considered with a little more detail, because the best works of the sculptors of Spain are to be found in the churches and the convents, many of which are still hidden from the profane.

With regard to the images that are venerated in Madrid and to the religious feasts and fasts observed there, it is best to consult *Costumbres y Devociones Madrileñas*, by Pedro de Repite.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### PEDRO DE MENA Y MEDRANO

**S**PANISH sculptural art has nearly always been the handmaid of religion. For a long time it remained an integral part of architecture, and, when it emerged in the form of a single statue, it was still destined for the church and the cloister, whether it represented a sacred character or was to lie recumbent on the profusely decorated tomb of some departed worthy.

If you wish to study the progress of the sculptor's art, you can do so with advantage, as regards the earlier centuries, in the Archæological Museum. You can see how the short, stumpy figures of the earliest date are gradually replaced by those that are longer and less stiff, how the faces gain in individuality and the drapery in freedom. Among the exhibits are two painted wooden statues of the thirteenth century, which brings us to the subject of this chapter.

The Spanish artist was fundamentally religious, and his art was often as much a vocation as that of the priest or the monk. Philip II, who suppressed Jews, Heretics, Moors and any form of art that displeased him, provided the volatile Italian, Luca,

Giordano, with a couple of theologians to see that he did not step outside orthodoxy ; he would probably have had no occasion to do so had the artist been a Spaniard. True it is that the church provided the only market for sculptors, after the decoration of palaces and universities ceased ; but, even had it not been so, it is certain that the character of the productions of that age would have remained the same. M. Paul Lafond, in his *La sculpture espagnole*, after noting that the principal types represented are those of the knight and the saint, says :

“ On ne saurait assez insister sur son catholicisme rigide et hautain, sur sa scrupuleuse observation des dogmes de l’Église, sur son orthodoxie maintenue et ravivée d’ailleurs par le droit, reconnu et respecté de tous, qu’a eu le Saint-Office de surveiller ses manifestations. Ce sentiment religieux profond et intense, sévère et dur, fait partie de l’ame espagnole ; les dévotions mondaines, le sentimentalisme élégant dont l’Italie donnera le spectacle et qu’elle essayera de lui infuser parviendront à peine à l’entamer, et encore uniquement à la surface.”

The truth of this statement is obvious when we remember that the Spanish Renaissance architecture, called Plateresque because the exquisite ornamentation resembled the silversmith’s work, has little of the pagan joy of life that was so characteristic of the style in Italy, France and England. The Italian Renaissance let loose the whole hierarchy of Olympia : Venus and her doves, Cupid and his arrows, little goat-footed Pan dancing to

the sound of his own pipes, nestled among roses or floated among the clouds of the pictures and were introduced into the plastic decorative productions of the age. But these frivolities were almost unknown in Spain, although nude figures and Amorini were introduced occasionally in decorative work.

The Plateresque architecture followed the classic model in structure rather than in decoration, which retained much of the Gothic idea and the Moorish sense of pattern. The sculptor was, as far as technique goes, immensely influenced by the Italian Schools, that of Michael Angelo having a peculiar fascination for him ; but, while adopting the freedom of flowing drapery, the attention to anatomy and the choice of attitudes that suggested motion, he preserved his original character intact. Out of the various foreign influences that had advanced or retarded the native output, there emerged a realistic and strongly individual school which was the glory of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. That this School should, in time, become exaggerated and decadent, is only in the nature of things ; when at its zenith, it is one of the most interesting manifestations of Spanish art.

Monsieur Marcel Dieulafoy points out in his interesting work, *La Statuaire polychrome en Espagne*, that the Greeks did not disdain to use coloured marble or even precious stones for the eyes or adornments of their statues. In the same statue they used marble, bronze, dyed bronze in various shades, metals, crystal and ivory. The

Italians were the first to throw discredit on the coloured statues, and the method fell into disuse in all countries except Spain, which remained faithful to the older idea. The Spanish sculptors used wood, terra-cotta or stone, painting the surface ; they also employed copper, bronze, silver, gold, slate for garments, sometimes alabaster for flesh. Coloured statues, Monsieur Dieulafoy tells us, agreed with the ornamentation of the Spanish churches and appealed to the realistic popular imagination. He gives some interesting particulars of the various guilds of artists and craftsmen that collaborated in the execution of the great retablos that were erected in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In the first place there was the architect or sculptor—he usually combined the two gifts—who was responsible for the design of the whole scheme, which had to be in harmony with the architecture of the church in which it was to be placed. He was called the “Trazador” or “Ensamblador,” and under his control were the imaginarios, who carved the images, the master-masons and the carpenters ; but the colouring was in other hands, the painters, damasceners and gilders working under an artist called the Encarnador, who painted the flesh of the figures. In the case of the sculptor who executed a single figure, the same rule held good. He gave his statue into the hands of the painters who were to complete his work.

Many were the quarrels that arose over this division of control, and much jealousy gave rise to ill-feeling between the two arts. The sculptor,

naturally, gave the first place to his creation and looked on those who coloured his work as his subordinates. The painters, who had arrived at great proficiency in their very technical work, despised any sculptor who ventured to do without their aid. Pacheco is specially contemptuous concerning the efforts made by some sculptors to colour their own statues, and, when we remember what care and skill was required in order to arrive at perfection, we are inclined to think that there is something to be said on the side of the painters. Not only did the Encarnador paint the flesh artistically, and sometimes horribly realistically, and the Estofador represent wonderful robes of fine damask, but the gilder, who coated the figure with gold, varied its density so skilfully that the metallic sheen shone through more strongly in those places where the high lights were required.

When Pedro de Mena began to work in this branch of sculpture, it had already a glorious past behind a present in which it was once again in demand.

The sixteenth century, which had brought the new style of architecture to Spain, and had also seen its extinction, was remarkable for the school of architects that arose during that period. Enrique de Egas in Toledo, his son-in-law, Alonso de Covarrubias in Alcalá de Henares, Francisco de Colonia in Burgos, Rodrigo Gil de Ontañon, Bartolomé Ordoñez, Diego de Siloe, Felipe Vigarni, Juan Guas, and how many others, were busy erecting those monuments of civil and ecclesiastical architecture

that we have all admired. It was the age, too, of Juan de Arfe, the Benvenuto Cellini of Spain, whose Custodia are unique in art, as well as that of a whole galaxy of sculptors. The noble and virile art of Alonso de Berruguete and the classic style of Gaspar Becerra made a notable advance in the execution of polychrome sculpture ; but decadence came, and then stagnation, and it was not until the Andalusian Martinez Montañez revived the art in the early seventeenth century that it came into favour again.

Moñtanez died in 1649, and the next great name in the Andalusian School was Alonso Cano, who came to Granada and set up a studio there in 1652.

Pedro de Mena was born in Granada in 1628 ; he was the son of a painter in whose studio he began his studies, before becoming a disciple of Cano, whose style he imitated at the beginning of his career. Mena was undoubtedly a master of his art, one who brought the carving of wooden statues to its greatest power of expression and execution. Leaving aside other interesting sculptors as, for example, Pedro de Roldan and his daughter Maria, and many another, let us endeavour to trace in outline the career of this typically Spanish artist. This effort is made easier for us because we have but to follow the authoritative work of Don Ricardo de Orueta : *La vida y la obra de Mena y Medrano*.

Don R. de Orueta reminds us that foreign influences were dying out by the beginning of the seventeenth century, and that Spain was isolating herself, and her art was becoming more personal.

It was the time of the consolidation of the national character and of an impulse towards realism in art and literature. Painting had a wider field, but sculpture had to step down to the level of the ignorant. The Virgin might be ever young and beautiful, but the Christ must be the Man of Sorrows and intensely human. There were no subtleties in this art, no half tints ; it was all emotion, movement, exaggeration even. Tears of crystal were tolerated in the effort to appeal to the imagination of the multitude, horrible wounds and tortured limbs testified to the sufferings of the martyrs.

Pedro de Mena was endowed with a sense of lyric beauty and grace. He was essentially religious, and his five children were all dedicated to the Church for which he worked until he died, in 1688. His production was very large, his industry ceaseless. His chief masterpieces were the uncoloured series of statues that are now in the Cathedral in Malaga, the polychrome statues that are to be found in many parts of Spain and the fine praying statues of the Catholic Kings in Granada.

Señor de Orueta makes some interesting remarks concerning Mena's style. He was not a faithful imitator of Cano, who remained always the same, while his pupil progressed and developed on his own lines. There were four periods of his activity. In the first period he imitated his master Cano, and was struggling to overcome difficulties ; in the second he was working at Malaga, attracted by external beauty ; in the third period he had vanquished all

difficulties and was attracted by the inner and the mystic ; and in the fourth came decadence and a studio in which his pupils turned out coloured statues under his direction.

After reading this book we can go back to the churches and the convents and hunt out for ourselves many statues that we might otherwise have missed. Some of the finest are hidden in the Descalzas and other convents, but perhaps, in time, the rules of *clausura* may become less rigorous. In any case, the study is well worth the time expended, and some of the hints given by Mena's latest biographer are very instructive, helping us to recognize a genuine Mena when we see one.

We learn here that Mena's figures are never muscular, that in his drapery he often aims at giving a strong sense of light and shade, and sometimes makes small angles to enhance the effect of the deeper pleats. Although his peculiarities varied at different periods of his development, he may be known, generally speaking, by the facial and skull-bones being strongly accentuated, the cheek-bones prominent, the chin strong, the jaw wide, with the masseter muscles in evidence. The forehead is generally narrow, the eyebrows are straight, over the eyes are heavy lids with a downward sweep. When the eyes are downcast, the drawing of the upper lid is accentuated, marking the lachrymal sac and giving it importance.

In hands and feet Mena is particularly successful, but he often hides the ears ; he abuses the laws of proportion when it suits his purpose. For his

female saints he affects an oval face with full cheeks and a small chin.

His most interesting phase is that in which he is most attracted towards the inner vision, when his spiritualized faces with hollowed eye-sockets and mouths half open, as if to speak, affect us not only from the sentimental point of view, but from their sheer artistry. The finest of these are perhaps the Magdalen, the St. Francis and St. Peter of Alcántara.

## CHAPTER XXV

### EXCURSIONS ROUND MADRID

**F**EW people leave Madrid without having made some excursions in the neighbourhood. If a visit be made in the spring or autumn it is customary to go to the Palace of la Granja, with its gardens and its wonderful fountains, or to that other royal palace of Aranjuez and, incidentally, to Segovia. This beautiful old city, which seems doubly old after staying in modern Madrid, was a capital city in the time of the Iberi, and the Romans have left a fine aqueduct and other remains behind them to testify to their occupation, which lasted close on five hundred years. After these classic ruins the Gothic Cathedral of the Ontaños, father and son, and even the older Alcázar and the fortified palaces, seem things of yesterday.

From Segovia it is easy to motor to Aranjuez, beautifully situated on a plain watered by the sweeping bends of the Tagus, where once the Roman sybarites had their villas and where the military Order of Santiago erected a palace in 1387. On the site of the latter the present palace stands, a monument to the taste and the ambition of the first of the French Bourbon Kings. It had been twice burned



117  
CALLE DE RICOETOS. MADRID



A COUNTRY CART. MADRID



down before that date, and has suffered from fire since, but, luckily, only in a minor degree. The gardens are famous, and there is a little Trianon called "La Casa del Labrador."

El Pardo, the hunting lodge of Charles V, is so near Madrid that it can be visited at any time, either by car or by tram. The trams start from the Ermita de San Antonio de la Florida, where we have already admired the graceful frescoes of Goya; beyond this point you wind along a good road through olive and pine woods, catching glimpses of blue mountains on one side and of laundresses washing their linen along the Manzanares on the other. Before starting you can visit a famous popular resort, La Bombilla. This was one of the places of amusement that were famous in the days of Ramon de la Cruz and Goya, when it was frequented by the manolos and vagabonds; it is equally popular to-day, and is the scene of many a festivity. Anyone who desires to see the typical Spanish dancing should come here in spring or autumn when people go out of the town to enjoy the country. The dancing at the many cafés of the Bombilla is considered the best of its kind to be seen in Madrid.

The first view of the long white mass of the Pardo, lying low among surrounding hillocks, gives an impression of something foreign; it suggests one of those picturesque German mediæval houses with their steep slate roofs and their pepper-pot turrets. Enclosed within a moat that is now drained, the house has white walls, many windows and a steep roof, and it was, indeed, planned on a German model

to please the King's mistress, Barbara Plomberg, afterwards the mother of Don Juan of Austria, of Lepanto fame.

Before entering the palace it is best to climb to the top of a steep little hill to a convent chapel where there is an interesting polychrome statue of Christ lying recumbent on an altar. The anatomy is wonderfully correct, the expression one of acute agony. It is a miracle-working image, and the walls of the chapel are hung with tributes to the efficacy of the cures that have been wrought here.

I remember well my last visit to the Pardo. It was a fine afternoon in February, one of those afternoons when the colour is soft and yet clear. From the point of vantage where we stood outside the chapel door, one could not fail to be struck by the peculiar character of the landscape. Behind us were the now familiar mountains ; at our feet lay the Pardo, backed by woods where the wild boar used to be hunted not so long ago ; all around us the dun-coloured plain that had given its name to the palace rolled away, dotted here and there with stumpy yews and umbrella pines. And there, in the distance, was the silhouette of Madrid standing up against the paling sky. It was a landscape such as Velazquez loved to paint, and it only wanted Prince Baltazar Carlos to caracole by on his pony to make the picture complete.

The Pardo was built by Charles V in 1543, and was restored by Charles III in 1772. The Patio is far more Spanish in character than is the exterior ; it is all white and light in style, with a flight of steps

leading to the first story, which contains the principal suite of rooms. Every wall in the palace is hung with tapestry from the Royal Factory, chiefly after the designs of Goya, Bayeu and Teniers. There are frescoes by Gaspar Becerra, Bayeu and others, and the furniture is of the Empire period. There is a theatre with a dusty stage and rows of empty chairs, where once the theatre-loving monarchs of Spain watched the drama that helped to distract their minds from affairs of state ; now it accentuates the impression of sadness that is given by a stroll through rooms which, for all their decoration, are nothing but an empty shell. On the way out you see the mortuary chamber of King Alfonso XII, now converted into a chapel.

Alcalá de Henares is a place that no visitor to Madrid should fail to visit, though I must confess that it cannot be appreciated in a few hours. It is not only that there is so much to see and study from an architectural point of view, but there is also so much that is interesting historically. It is a place with an abundant story and with a peculiar atmosphere of its own that cannot be sensed by a hasty visitor with a guide-book in one hand and a time-table in the other. As I have only passed a couple of hours here in the company of a merry party bound for a further expedition to a neighbouring country-house, I can only record a snapshot impression. To my great regret I was not able to return, as I had hoped.

Alcalá is an attractive town situated at the meeting of two rivers ; hence the name given by

the Romans—Complutum. The Moors had a fortress here which they called Al Kaláh, the fort, which was wrested from them by the French monk who was appointed first Archbishop of Toledo soon after the Reconquest. As a reward for this deed of valour Alcalá was given to the See of Toledo, and the place became a favourite resort of the ecclesiastics who built the Archiepiscopal Palace, which was enlarged and partially rebuilt under the direction of Covarrubias. In the Plaza Mayor is a statue to Cervantes, who was born here in 1547 and christened in the Church of Santa María hard by ; and here, too, was born Catherine of Aragon, of unhappy memory.

After such a brief visit but little remains in my mind. I remember long arcaded streets down which carts drawn by oxen went their slow way, and the little shops in which we found all sorts of amusing things. And of course we visited the Archbishop's palace and the University, as well as some of the churches.

The Archbishop's palace has left the strongest impression on my mind. I can recall the beautiful Patio of piedra de Tamajón, its graceful arches in the lower story, its bracketed columns in the upper and the rusticated panels that decorated the fine staircase. The famous Audience Chamber, decorated in the Moorish style, has been garishly restored, but the artesonado ceilings in other rooms, carried out in reddish pine wood and uncoloured, are very fine. The doorways are often beautifully carved, and it must be noted that Covarrubias had Alonso de

Berruguete as collaborator. There is a capital of a column in the Archæological Museum in Madrid, bold in design and fine in execution, from the chisel of this great sculptor.

The University, which was founded by Cisneros in 1508, is the only building executed in the “obra del romano” by the Gothicist, Rodrigo Gil de Ontañon, who was employed in 1553 to replace the original brick façade by one in stone. The original architect, Pedro de Gumiel, executed his façade in brick, and the story goes that when the King protested that it should have been made of something more costly, the great Cardinal replied that he expected the youth of the future, to whom he handed over his University, to convert it into marble. And so, less than fifty years afterwards, it was done; not by the studious youth but by the priests.

The façade, as we see it now, is simple in design, with scanty fenestration; it has some beautiful detail in the decorative stonework, and it is interesting to see that the girdle of the Franciscan Order is reproduced in the central motive as well as the Royal escutcheon. But the colour of the yellowish calcined stone of which the University is built has a magic of its own that counts for much when considering the general impression made by the building. There is a statue of the Cardinal by Vilches in the outer courtyard.

It is almost inevitable, here in Alcalá where he accomplished so much, to devote some attention to the life and character of this remarkable man.

I always thought, and perhaps others may have had the same illusion, that when Cisneros left his convent to become the Confessor of Isabel the Catholic, he had passed all his early life in the seclusion of the cloister. We read so often of the humble Franciscan monk rising to greatness, and we are surprised at the knowledge of the world displayed by the learned man in his after life. It was not until I read the monograph of Mr. J. P. R. Lyall, *Cardinal Ximenes*, that the enigma was explained.

Alfonso Ximenes de Cisneros was born about 1436 in a village near Madrid. He came of a noble family which had fallen on evil days as far as money was concerned. The boy was sent to school in Alcalá de Henares and to college at Salamanca, where he took a high degree in civil and canon law. Then he set out to seek his fortune and came to Rome, where he practised in the Ecclesiastical Courts as an advocate for some years. On the death of his father he returned to Spain with a document in his pocket entitling him to the first vacant benefice in the See of Toledo. Unluckily for him, the Archbishop of Toledo not only refused him the first that offered, but also clapped him into prison, where he remained for five or six years. At the end of this period he released Cisneros, and even gave him the living, which his victim did not care to have in the circumstances, taking, in preference, a chaplaincy to Cardinal Mendoza. The Cardinal thought highly of him, and made him Grand Vicar when he himself was appointed Arch-

bishop of Seville. After some years Cisneros gave up this appointment and entered a Franciscan monastery in Toledo, adopting the name of Franciscus when he took the habit.

What was the reason of this move? Was he a disappointed man whose ambition had soared higher? Was he a *bona fide* scholar desirous of studying in the seclusion of the cloister? Or had he, simply, a vocation for monastical life? History tells us nothing except that he spent some years in strict seclusion, studying and carrying out the disciplinary rules of his Order. It is evident, however, that when Cardinal Mendoza called him out of the monastery to accept a position of great responsibility he had served his apprenticeship in the world, and was therefore able to take his place in the political arena as well as in the domain of learning and piety.

Cisneros was middle-aged when his public life began; he became successively Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo, Grand Inquisitor and finally Governor of Castile. He was an Imperialist and an autocrat in matters of religion and politics; he was in favour of colonial expansion and of forcible conversion. When over seventy he commanded an expedition to Morocco from which he returned victorious. He was a man of immense will-power and achieved whatever he set out to do. He founded a university, endowing it out of his official income, a fact that amazed King Francis I of France, who could not understand how one man had been able to accomplish a feat that had

taken the combined efforts of several Kings of France. And then he published the Polyglot Bible when printing was yet in its infancy, making Alcalá a centre for learned men and a regular hive of printers and their presses between the years 1514 and 1517. In this latter year the great Cardinal died, aged over eighty ; it is characteristic of the man that he received the last proof sheets of his Bible when on his death-bed, and that he returned thanks to God for having permitted him to accomplish the work.

The beautiful Renaissance tomb of Cisneros is designed by Domenico Fancelli of Florence, but Bartolomé Ordoñez executed it after his death. The protecting Reja is by Nicolas de Vergara.

The house where we spent the afternoon of this memorable day was on the property of Count Romanones, and is used by members of his family as a place in which to enjoy a real *vilegiatura*. It is right away in the country, and the house stands in a pretty garden that soon gives place to wild and uncultivated wooded land watered by a purling stream that reminded me of Scotland. In the garden are rose-bushes and palm-trees and all sorts of southern vegetation, and the beds were carpeted with violets. Count Romanones' youngest son, Don Agustín de Figueroa, who was our host on this occasion, besides giving us an excellent luncheon, showed us all sorts of interesting things, including a great cave in the garden which suggested smugglers, but turned out to be a cellar with immense vats full of the wine of the country.

On the way back to Madrid we saw one of those sunsets that remain in the mind. I had seen many faintly resembling it in the city, but none that was at the same time so luminous and so intense. The lonely country-side, so sparsely populated and so primitive in character, became suddenly transfused with a rose-coloured glow, which grew in intensity until it resembled flame and then slowly and softly faded away.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE ESCORIAL

“ Du haut de la montagne  
Près de Guadarrama  
On découvre l'Espagne  
Comme un panorama.

A l'horizon sans borne,  
Le grave Escorial  
Lève son dôme morne  
Noir de l'ennui royal.

Et l'on voit dans l'estompe  
Du brouillard cottoneux  
Si loin que l'œil s'y trompe,  
Madrid, point lumineux ! ”

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER.

THE Escorial has been called the Eighth Wonder of the World. It has been described so often and so well that it seems superfluous to add to what has been already written, and yet it impresses people who see it for the first time so variously that most descriptions, however faithful, leave something to be desired. It is so vast that it can be seen, as a faint blur from Madrid, at a distance of fifty-one kilometres, and so forbidding in aspect that it suggests the prison-house of a race of giants, set high on a spur of rock against the bare and incomparable majesty of the Sierra.

More than any other great monument of the past, it depends for its effect on its superb situation.

The Royal Monastery of St. Laurence of the Escorial was built, as every one knows, by Philip II, who had been commanded to erect a mausoleum for his father, Charles V. As he had also undertaken to found a monastery in honour of St. Laurence, because his troops had destroyed a church dedicated to that Saint in 1557, the idea came to him to combine his two schemes by joining the monastery to the mausoleum. Having once started on the undertaking, he put his whole heart into the work, using all that driving energy which formed so striking a feature of his character. "Philip II," says D. A. de Beruete, in his *School of Madrid*, "did not trouble himself to beautify the place that he had chosen for a capital, but he spent a fortune in building the monastery of El Escorial, destined to be the burial-place of the House of Austria, on the steepest and most sterile spot on the southern slope of the Guadarrama. This fact is typical both of the age and the monarch, and it sums up the temperament and the ideals of the Spanish people in the sixteenth century."

Having chosen the site, probably because of its proximity to his new capital and its position among the granite rocks that provided him with building material, Philip set about the work in earnest. He had already shown a strong preference for the desornamentado style, and he resolved that he would not employ any of the architects who had been engaged in the buildings designed in the style

of the decorated or Plateresque School. The names of the great architects who had adopted the "obra romano," as it was called in Spain, were nothing to him, or rather they were regarded as will-o'-the-wisps leading sober people astray. Mrs. Byne has shown, in her *Spanish Architecture of the Sixteenth Century*, that Philip killed the beautiful Plateresque by his arbitrary decree that no public building should be erected without showing the plans to his architects. She also notes the consuming interest that Philip took in the progress of the building operations at the Escorial. "The great edifice occupied all his hours, for, even when not present, he was dictating instructions for the founding of statues in Milan, the making of Rejas in Zaragoza and Cuenca and of lamps, candelabra and silver crosses in Toledo, for the cutting of the mighty Cuenca pines in the Guadarrama region as far west as Ávila, and for the quarrying of jasper and marble in Burgo de Osma, Las Navas and other spots ; and, finally, in the regular checking of accounts."

Philip summoned Juan Bautista of Toledo, an architect who had studied in Italy, to design his monastery, and the first stone was laid in 1563, in which year the architect died. His successor was Juan de Herrera, a man who has left his mark in Spain and who was the strongest and most original architect in the style of the second Renaissance, the *estilo desornamentado* that Philip preferred to all others. It took something like two years to lay the foundations, and then the grey walls began to rise out of the solid rock, and for twenty years the King

watched unceasingly as they were built up to their full height and roofed in, and as the dome that some prefer to the larger and more striking dome of St. Peter's at Rome crowned the whole. And all the time he was greatly occupied with the decoration of the interior.

The ground plan of the Escorial is a rectangle of 675 feet by 530 ; to the east there is an addition in the shape of a small palace, so giving countenance to the idea, probably incorrect, that in shape the monastery was meant to resemble the gridiron of the patron Saint. The vast surface of the granite walls are entirely without any decoration, and are pierced by hundreds of small windows.

The main entrance is in the western façade, and over it is a statue of St. Laurence and his gridiron ; you pass through a door to find yourself in a court-yard—the Patio de los reyes—so called because the statues of the Kings of the Old Testament stand aloft on the top of the columns of the façade of the church. Juan Bautista Monegro executed these statues in single blocks of granite, with white marble for face and hands and gilded bronze for sceptre and crown. Through the cloisters you approach the church, which is beautiful in proportions and is copied from the original plan of St. Peter's at Rome, though, of course, much smaller in size. There are a number of side altars, some of which have good pictures, but the finest effect is before the steep flight of steps that leads to the high altar, behind which the retable, by Giacomo Trezzo of Milan, glimmers with precious stones and marbles. High up

to right and left are the kneeling figures of Charles V and Philip II with their families, by Pompeo Leoni. They are fine works of art, these sculptured marble figures, and represent Charles with his second wife and their daughter as well as his two sisters. Philip has his first, third and fourth wives with the son of the first, Don Carlos. Only his second wife is out of this family party—Mary, Queen of England—who lies recumbent on her tomb in the sculptured dignity of Westminster Abbey.

The paintings on the ceiling and in the dome are poor and inharmonious, and that brings us to the question of the general decoration of the interior, often so different in intention to the undecorated exterior. That Philip went into every detail we know; we have the lists of Italian and Spanish artists whom he employed. Perhaps, like many another autocrat, he was a little inconsistent. For example, who would have suspected the austere King to have rejected the severe and spiritual art of El Greco and have preferred to it the inanities of Luca Giordano? He not only employed the Italian, but was best pleased when he merited his nickname of "Luca fa presto." When he was working at his frescoes, a courier went every day from Madrid to the Escorial to report progress to Philip, who had provided him not only with painting materials, but with two doctors of theology to aid him in his compositions. In the *Annals of the Artists of Spain*, Sir William Stirling Maxwell gives one of the messenger's reports: "Sire," it runs, "your Luca Giordano has painted this day about twelve figures

thrice as large as life. To these he has added the proper angels, cherubs and seraphs, and clouds to support the same. The two doctors of divinity have not answers ready for all his questions, and their tongues are too slow to keep pace with the speed of his pencils." Not a bad day's work from the point of view of the workman.

You can walk for hours in the Escorial, passing from patio to patio, inspecting cloisters, visiting the palace added by Philip IV, in which is a gallery containing pictures of naval battles and rooms gay with the tapestries copied from Goya's frescoes ; you can, if you are strong enough, look into the splendid library where all sorts of treasures are shown in glass cases—manuscripts, codices, illuminated missals—besides the well-stocked bookshelves which require a special permission to make nearer acquaintance possible. But, if you have little time and are attracted by a library, it is as well to pass on after looking at the portraits of Charles and Philip—the latter as an old man—that portrait by Pantoja de la Cruz which we had an opportunity of seeing last year in London. The Pantheon must be visited, however unwilling you may be, because it is the *raison d'être* of the whole building. The site was chosen by Philip, who desired that he might rest just under the Capilla Mayor in order that Mass might be sung daily over his remains ; the decoration, all marble and gilding, was carried out in the reign of Philip IV. The Pantheon consists of an octagon-shaped room fitted with niches in which are placed the coffins

of the Kings and of any Queen who was the mother of the heir. The Pantheon of the Infantes contains a quantity of white marble tombs, many of them unoccupied.

Having visited all these points of interest, which an inexorable guide insists on your seeing, you may go to the coro alto, after having seen the interesting pictures in the sacristy, among which is the fine picture of Claudio Coello and works by Titian, Ribera, El Greco, etc., and to the Salas Capitulares in which is El Greco's rejected picture of Saint Maurice "in his bad second style" that Philip would not allow in the church. The coro alto is a chapel above the western end of the church used by the monks for their private devotions; the stalls are by Herrera, and the seat occupied by Philip is shown. The great choral books in their massive bindings are interesting and, in a tiny chapel, is a beautiful ivory Crucifix by Benvenuto Cellini, the only one of that size and in that material that he executed. But, when all is said and done, the "cells" of Philip are the most poignantly interesting. His bedroom has still in it the bed on which he died, and there is the opening into the capilla mayor which enabled him to hear Mass as he lay dying. And in the front part of the room, which served him as a sitting-room, is a queer little writing-table, a large globe, a gouty footstool and one of his carrying-chairs. On the wall are a few pictures, among which are one by Albert Dürer, which is a sort of lesson in Natural History, and "The Seven Capital Sins" by J. Bosch.

THE ESCORIAL





I have, hitherto, spoken of the Escorial from the point of view of the tourist, who can seldom afford more time than that required for a single visit. But there is no doubt that it is impossible to appreciate it in the few hours allowed for the inspection of the chief points of interest. I imagine that a week spent at the very good hotel in the upper part of the town, near the monastery and the woods, if the spring or summer were chosen, would prove well worth while. The more intimate charm of the landscape, the more intimate knowledge of this great monument to a vanished period of history, placed in proud isolation, would then appeal more strongly to the imagination than is possible during a hurried visit.

The best way of going to the Escorial is by car, not only because it is the quickest and the most comfortable, but because it affords snatches of views of the fortress-sepulchre and endless wide views of the dun plains and the ever-changing lights and shadows on the ring of mountains to the north-east. When I last visited it in February 1921, I was taken by some kind relations, who chanced to come to Madrid, in a hired car. I do not think that we shall ever forget the adventures that befell us on the way back, owing to tyre trouble. Annoying as it was at the time, those hours spent while the dusk of evening fell over the wild beauty of the scene taught me more about the spirit of the Sierra than had all the hours of the day.

We left Madrid in the morning—a glorious, bright, very cold morning—and drove down through

the Park and out into the open country, mounting slowly and then more suddenly, the ground getting more stony and barren as we neared the Sierra. The sky was of that brilliant blue that is so typical of Spain, the air was clear, the distant mountains to the north were still a clear, pale blue with snowy tips, while the spur on which the monastery is built was dun colour, and all around odd little boulders appeared by the roadside. The chance views that we caught of the Escorial, at the turn of the road, showed its impressive size, its strength, the cold colour of the granite and the characteristic gloom in which it is shrouded.

The little village of Escorial, a name derived from the Latin for the refuse of the mines—*Scoriæ*—does not alter much with the years, but the upper village has now a good many villas where the Madrileños go in the summer. There is, of course, a college at the Escorial, which brings a good many people here, and others motor over, especially on Sunday, to lunch at the hotel.

The Casita del Principe, built for the Infante Don Carlos in 1772, is worth a visit on the return journey. It is a quaint little two-storied house, designed by Villanueva. It contains suites of small, low rooms, decorated in the Pompeian style; there are also some good specimens of the china from the Retiro. Another little house, built for the Infante Don Gabriel in 1752, is to be seen, and of course the bench cut in the rock where Philip sat to watch his dream take shape is sure to be pointed out.

While allowing that the Monastery of St. Laurence of the Escorial is the Eighth Wonder of the World, and that it contains much that is beautiful, over and above its weight and bulk and the stern simplicity of its architecture, I must confess that I brought away with me an impression that depended on the situation as much as on the building itself. The one is the complement of the other. The landscape would lose much of its impressiveness if the monastery were not there to dominate the scene, and the monastery would lose half its majesty if placed in a more commonplace setting.

Looking back, that evening, we saw the mountains dark against the sky that had bars of flame right across the west ; the great building was merged into the mass of the rock above and beyond it, and to eastward the sky was cold, metallic blue, fading into translucent emerald green.

When we at last reached Madrid, we found ourselves in a stream of people dressed for the Carnival which, though shorn of much of its ancient glory, is still popular with the poorer classes. In the good old days when King Carnival reigned supreme it was dangerous to pass down certain streets. The Pelele, a suit of clothes stuffed with straw, dangled above the head of the passer-by ; as it always represented some individual who had become unpopular either on account of his politics or his character, the followers or friends of the pilloried one avoided that street. Rotten eggs and pails of water were also likely to descend on the heads of the unwary as well as the sarcastic couplets, more

or less witty, in which the Madrileño delighted. Faster and more furious the fun became, until the stroke of twelve on the night of Holy Thursday announced the end of the revels. At that hour the Peleles were destroyed and the quaint ceremony of the Burial of the Sardine was accomplished down by the river, the scene lit up fitfully by the glare of the torches.

In these latter days the Carnival is a poor thing, being even banished from the Castellana, where the procession used to keep up something of its old state. Even so, the streets were full of carts and cabs, and the scene was sufficiently animated. From the lonely Sierra to the crowded streets, where it was necessary to go at foot's pace, was to pass from the sixteenth century to the twentieth, from the cloistered solitude of a tomb to the bustle and noise of modern life.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### GOOD FRIDAY IN TOLEDO

"Toledo, crown of Spain and light of the World."

JUAN DE PADILLA to his natal city on the eve of his execution, 1521.

"Il y a là des souvenirs à occuper un historien pendant dix ans et un chroniqueur toute sa vie!"—ALEXANDRE DUMAS.

WHEN I went to Toledo for the second time it was not as a chronicler or an historian, or even with the intention of making a few scattered notes to add to those already collected on Madrid. Other and far abler pens than mine have written about the imperial city set high on her rock over the classic sweep of the Tagus, and I had no wish to add a postscript to the mass of books on this subject. I went to Toledo because she has a reputation for religious observances, and the "dead city" we read about in literature seemed likely to be a quiet place in which to spend the last day of Lent.

As it turned out, I was joined by two young and cheerful friends, and I found Toledo alive with people and humming with life. It was too early for tourists, but many Spaniards seem to spend Easter there, and we were lucky to get rooms at the Hôtel Castilla. I think it was because Toledo

presented to me an aspect other than that to be gleaned from most books that I have decided, with some misgiving, to attempt a brief account of our stay there.

Every one who knows Spain knows Toledo. Was she founded by Tubal or by Hercules ? The question is a nice one. All we know is that she was a capital city in the days of the Iberi and that in her walls are remains of Roman and Visigothic, as well as mediaeval, workmanship, and that architecture of five civilizations is yet to be found in the buildings that adorn her streets. The Gothic Cathedral, standing in a hollow among a conglomeration of mean streets, is a regular museum of art ; the square mass of the Alcázar dominates the river ; the wonderful Alcántara bridge was probably coeval with the foundation of the town ; the mosques, the churches, the houses and the tangled wilderness of streets, are too well known to need a word of description.

We arrived at nightfall, a night that had been heralded by a peculiarly tragic sunset, followed by an equally wonderful moonrise which left a picture of a great expanse of land and of a sky that was barred by a mass of black clouds. The moon shone as we passed under the outer gate and over the Alcántara bridge and through the battlemented tower that guards the city on the inner side ; it glinted fitfully on to the heavy masses of masonry as we went up the sharp ascent and arrived at the lights in the market-place—the Moorish Zocodover—and disappeared as we turned into a dark and

narrow lane before coming out in the open space before the hotel.

I spent the greater part of the morning of Good Friday in the cathedral, and then went out into the crowded streets. Wishing to find a short cut to the hotel, I dived into a side street and lost my way. Now it is particularly easy to lose your way in Toledo. Don G. Morales, whose brochure on his native place is a record of love, says that compared with the labyrinth of the streets of Toledo that other labyrinth of Crete was a perfect joke. He says that there are streets and houses unknown to anyone, which may have been deserted for years, and there are people who resemble molluscs, never leaving the shell that protects them. Nobody, not even the oldest inhabitant, knows all the streets and lanes in Toledo.

It is sometimes rather annoying to take a long turn when you mean to take a short one, but, on this occasion, although I had lost my way I thought that I had found something for which I had been looking ever since we arrived. I had really and truly come upon Toledo, the dead city, mourning over her lost grandeur. I walked up and down the unbelievably narrow streets, in which there was always something archaic or picturesque or amusing, and found them absolutely deserted. In one of these, where silence brooded and where I imagined myself approaching the palace of the Sleeping Beauty, I had suddenly a sensation that I was not really alone. I looked up and discovered that on almost every balcony on either side of the street,

from the first floor upwards, was a group of people taking the air. As I looked up, they looked down, with glances of not unfriendly amusement at the stranger within their gates. So that was one more illusion gone.

All that afternoon the Zocodover was thronged with a crowd of holiday makers, which swarmed right up to the romantic Moorish arch of the Sangre, and which was thickest round a man who stood on a tub. He had an easel by his side on which were little pictures, and he was distributing leaflets which were eagerly bought by the people. I took him for a Socialist, and drew near in order to hear what he had to say, only to discover that he was the modern version of the age-old story-teller. He sold the printed words of the story that he had just told, and the pictures on the easel, which were unpleasantly thrilling, served as illustrations. The title of the story that he had just related was the cheery one of *A Boy beheaded by his Father*.

Leaving the Zocodover, which was chiefly filled with peasants, I walked up the Calle del Comercio, where I found the townspeople in their best, cadets walking three and four abreast, some officers in uniform, old ladies of immense girth and slim maidens in mantillas. Leaving the fashionable promenade, I turned up a side street and walked on until I came to the intersection of several streets, one of which dived steeply downhill, the Calle de Santa Justina. Half-way down this street is the church of the same name from which a procession was expected to start, and here a small

crowd had collected. It was a quiet crowd, intent on the business in hand, and there was an air of expectancy abroad. In the church was the dust of many feet and little of note besides some of the sacred images that were soon to be displayed, so I took up a position on the doorstep of a house at the higher end of the road. After some time the procession began to form.

The first to arrive were the young seminarists with their black cassocks and their round beaver hats, each with a long, unlighted candle in his hand ; then a man on horseback appeared by the door of the church clad in full armour. After what seemed a very long wait, the boy priests in embryo were marshalled into single file on either side of the road, and their candles were lighted, giving out a pale flame in the daylight ; after the seminarists came men in mufti and officers in uniform, each with a lighted candle. When all were ready the procession began, at last, to move.

First came some men bearing lighted candles before the parochial Manga, a frame covered with velvet bearing the emblems of the Saint which each parish church possesses, and which holds the Crucifix. As it came up the hill the two files of men and boys on either side began to move, and then came a flash of a crude violet as a body of men appeared wearing violet cassocks with peaked head-dresses and masks from which their eyes looked out of slits. And then the " set pieces " emerged, one after another, placed on wooden platforms that were carried by men. I do not

remember all the figures that were carried past, but I have a vision of a Deposition with Christ still on the Cross, from which two Jews, in long robes and with coarse black hair floating in the air, are about to remove Him. The Jews are mounted on gaunt ladders which have a most curiously grotesque effect. Beneath the Cross the Virgin sits, with St. John and the Magdalen on either side. There was an Entombment in a glass-case and various other figures, but the most impressive was a beautiful sad-faced Virgin dressed in black velvet with the dead Christ on her knees, and another, a sumptuous and queenly figure, dressed in black velvet embroidered in gold, kneeling before a floral Cross placed in a nest of lighted candles. After the principal figures had gone by, the horsemen in armour rode along, followed by two men at arms also in harness of war. They were followed by some men in mediæval costume of black and red, and then came the band of the regiment quartered in Toledo. As the last light twinkled and the last man turned the corner at the cross-roads, the crowd, which was now considerable, melted away, and the street settled down into a dusty silence.

I am afraid that I know nothing of the history of this procession. It was far more homely and popular than that event described by Blasco Ibañez in his novel *La Catedral*. The procession of the Holy Sacrament through the streets on the day of the Corpus must be a far finer and more spectacular affair, but I am inclined to think that

the one just described is more typical of the religious sentiment of a people that has always been simple and self-reliant and austere.

After dark, when I had forgotten all about the procession, I came across it by accident on its return journey. The candles now gleamed like glow-worms, lighting up the faces of the seminarists and causing strange lights and shadows to chase each other across the painted faces of the images. The platforms lurched and the figures borne upon them seemed suddenly imbued with life ; the gaunt figures of the Jews on their ladders hung against a velvet sky in which the stars were beginning to show ; the face of the kneeling Madonna was lit up by the candles in her flowery garden. As it wound its way through the narrow street and disappeared to view, it was almost as if some pageant of past ages had materialized for our benefit and had disappeared like the flame of a blown-out candle.

With Saturday morning the town assumed a more normal aspect. We were not to leave until late afternoon, and the day was naturally spent in sightseeing. I had brought with me some most useful books given me by the Marqués de la Vega Inclan, the man to whose public spirit Toledo owes the preservation of the house of El Greco, but I did not read them until after we had left. I regret this fact, because they are very illuminating, and I would advise anyone visiting Toledo for the first time to read the brochure contributed by Don M. B. Cossío, the author of the authoritative life

of El Greco, which he has called *Art in Toledo*. These notes, the author says, are not to be considered as a guide to Toledo ; perhaps not, but they do constitute a guide to further study. They set forth in a few pages the secret of the art of El Greco, and they condense, in a few paragraphs, information concerning the architecture of the principal monuments. I would like to go to Toledo again with that slim book in my hand, because it simplifies the study of the bewilderingly profuse architectural beauties of the city. Another booklet published by the Comisaria Regia del Turismo concerns the house of El Greco, by Don Rafael Domenech. He tells a thrilling story of the vast cellars built by the Visigoths, which are still to be seen under the gardens belonging to the house, cellars in which Simuel Levi stored his gold, and in which, at a later day, Don Enrique de Aragón, reputed a necromancer, pored over his crucibles and cast horoscopes. Peter the Cruel tortured his once trusted friend, Simuel, in order to get the treasure, and then had him assassinated, the Alchemist went the way of all flesh and, in process of time, the strange painter from Crete set up his easel here, and is reported to have lived in luxury in the Moorish house which is now so well restored. Up above is the tower of the Church of Santo Tomé, part of which is of Visigoth construction ; within its walls, protected by a Reja, is the picture that El Greco painted in the house below, the famous "Burial of the Count of Orgaz."

But it was not the daylight ramblings nor yet the

candlelight procession that brought me nearer to the soul of Toledo. If you want really to conjure up the past and to forget the present, go out on some moonlight night and walk outside the walls ; then, and then only, will the ancient and imperial city reveal herself. Looking back at the granite walls of King Wamba, at the square mass of the Alcázar, at the crowded white walls of houses rising higher and higher, the mind begins to travel. The walls recall the Visigothic art which, as Padre Huidobro well says, was great, though it was never completely evolved ; the Alcázar, burned down and rebuilt until each façade tells a different architectural story, is yet the same palace in which Peter the Cruel shut up poor Blanche of Bourbon, and finally had her smothered in her sleep. Great Moorish rulers came here, including the generous Al Mamun who was tricked by Alfonso of León, and here came Alfonso vi of Castile with the Cid Campeador who was the first Castilian Alcalde of the city. And was it not Charles v who said that he never felt so truly an Emperor as when he was walking up the great staircase in the Alcázar of Toledo ?

If you walk through the modern Gate of Visagra—it dates from Charles v, and is modern in comparison with the old Bisagra Gate of the ninth century—and along the dusty avenues of the Paseo de Madrid, you pass the Hôpital de Afuera, the Hospital without the Gates, where Berruguete died after finishing his masterpiece, the tomb of Cardinal Tavera. As you go on, the road gets ever more desolate, and the landscape, lit up by the moon, is all grey and silver,

like some fantastic country in a dream. If you persist, you follow a road that has a thinly planted row of cypresses on either side. In the distance they look like a straggling double file of mourners and, in the end, it leads you to a railing behind which is the cemetery. And here, in 950 A.D., the great caliph, Abd-er-Rahman III, encamped on his way to besiege Toledo, a siege that lasted eight years.

Again, if you pass over the bridge of St. Martin with its five arches and its fortified towers and its unrivalled view of the gorge, and of the water silvered by the moon, you have a vision of pure beauty. And the famous Alcántara bridge with the single span never looks more regal than by night, with the massive ruins of the Castle of San Servando standing up against a moonlit sky.

The worst of it is that too many memories crowd into the mind, stifling the imagination. So many legends suggest themselves and, in the moonshine, you believe them all. Some are pleasant, some are horrible, possibly very few of them are historical. The fact remains that they people the solitudes just when, at last, you have been able to realize the dead city mourning over her past grandeur. Of all the memories of Toledo this one of steep rock and ravine, of granite walls and fortified castle, seen by the light of the moon, is by far the most lasting and the most typical.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### EASTER DAY IN MADRID

ON Easter Sunday, 27th March 1921, a Corrida de Toros extraordinaria was announced to inaugurate the Season. Having been repeatedly told that I could know nothing of Spain without seeing at least one bullfight, I made up my mind to attend this function that was announced for the day before I was to leave Madrid. I confess that I looked forward to it with rather mixed feelings. I could not look on it as a sport, because the bull has no chance ; he is doomed before he enters the arena, and his fate cannot be compared to that of the fox, which may live to old age and have the satisfaction of having tricked the field and the hounds more than once. If the bull, although artificially excited, has at least some fun for his money, and may give as good as he gets before he receives his quietus, the horses have nothing but a terrible attack which they cannot meet, and which is most merciful when it kills outright. But then the men—these at any rate enter the lists of their own free will—they show courage and skill, they risk their lives with as much coolness as if they were dancing instead of fighting. Let who will say that

there is no fascination in an encounter between man and beast, it does not alter the fact. There is something elemental in most of us that answers to a call like this. So I put my prejudices on one side, and prepare to enjoy the new experience.

How did bull-baiting arise? Without doubt it came into being because of the herds of wild bulls that ranged about Andalusia, dangerous alike to man and beast. And we find, from the eleventh century onwards, that the bullfight had become a national pastime and festival, which was popularized by the Moors and upheld by the Christians. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries every knight was a toreador, and rode against the bull in the arena as knights of old did against each other in the tourney. In order to act as *espada*, it was necessary for a knight not only to be a good swordsman and expert in the art of tackling the enemy, but he must also be able to prove that his blood was noble and his quarterings satisfactory. The *espada* rode on horseback until he was dismounted by the bull, after which he had to fight on foot. In the code of the mediæval bullring there were laws that were in favour of the man, and also a certain etiquette that he was obliged to observe with regard to his four-footed adversary.

When the first French Bourbon King, Philip V, came to the throne, he disapproved of the bullring, and the nobles, in consequence, gave up their favourite amusement. By this time, however, the people had become so much attached to the exciting spectacle that a new dispensation arose. The

professional bullfighter now appeared on the scene, new rules and regulations were framed, and a new national festival arose on the ashes of the old one. The upper classes returned as spectators, and the Corridas became once more a national institution.

Ferdinand VI patronized the bullfights and gave a bullring to the Hospital of Madrid, much as the Kings of old had allowed the Cofradias to cater for the theatres, taking part of the profits. And his Court painter, Goya, adored the Ring, making spirited sketches of the encounters of man and bull and of the manolos and majas who flocked to see it and whose picturesque appearance must have added so much to the spectacle as a whole.

The end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century marked the apogee of the bullring ; the toreadors then adopted the beautiful costumes that are still worn, and they became national heroes, performing acts of valour before excited audiences. Fine ladies like the celebrated Duchess of Alba were seldom absent on any special occasion ; they had their favourites among the popular heroes and treasured the ears of the bull when presented to them by the conqueror. In the year 1797, it is mentioned in *The Farington Diary* that a "Mattadori" killed seven bulls with seven strokes in Madrid, and that he gained £30 a day in the bullring. Other times, other customs, but the popular enthusiasm has persisted. Bullfighting is still a profitable profession, as well as a short cut to popular favour ; the populace of any great city and of many a small town in Spain still swarms in its

hundreds and thousands to witness the classic encounter and, no doubt, to bet on the result. The great herds of bulls are still kept up in Andalusia, and the trials take place annually to test the fighting qualities of the calves and to set apart those which give promise of keeping up the reputation of the herd of toros bravos in the arena. The actual contest that attracts thousands of spectators is but the last act in a long-drawn-out drama which begins in the sandy plains of Andalusia and ends on the blood-stained sand of the bullring.

Although I had read something concerning these matters at odd moments, I was quite ignorant of the finesse of the art of bullfighting and even of the best places to procure in the amphitheatre. I was lucky, therefore, in having as escort Don Guillermo Jimenez, a young and talented writer who was then acting as Chancellor at the Mexican Legation. Before taking up his diplomatic duties in Madrid, Señor Jimenez had already made his name as a journalist and writer. His style was slight and delicate and he touched with a light hand whatever subject he took up, whether it were a frivolous article on fashion or an essay on life and art. He was specially interested in this Corrida because the best known of the espadas was a Mexican.

The bullring, which is just off the farther part of the Calle de Alcalá, is a typically Spanish building which yet suggests a Roman amphitheatre. We found crowds of people in the street and inside the doors, although it was still early. As there was plenty of time we explored the place, inspecting the

closed doors behind which the bulls were waiting their "turn," going behind the scenes in search of the Mexican, Luis Freg, who had not yet arrived, and generally having a good look round. Then we mounted to our places, which my companion had thoughtfully chosen some way above the level of the arena.

The spectacle of the great sandy arena round which rows upon rows of seats rise up, seating something like fourteen thousand people, is very impressive, although the old picturesque element is there no longer. The mantillas, worn so frequently at church functions, were conspicuous by their absence. We noted one girl wearing the classic white mantilla and flowered manton, and I was amused to see that she was mentioned in an article in the press on the following morning. The writer, after bemoaning the absence of the broad-brimmed hats formerly worn by the men and the mantillas still so popular among the women, remarked this solitary exception, adding that she, O degenerate days! had arrived on the scene in the side car of a motorcycle.

Although the crowd was not marked by any peculiar costume, and although the absence of colour and the absence of sun made the whole effect rather sombre, it was interesting from many points of view. There they sat, men, women and children, packed close together, waiting for the show to begin. The quantities of children present explained the indifference to animals that is a characteristic of the Spanish youth. A small boy of about ten years

old who sat near us showed, during the performance, not only a sportsman-like interest in the art of the bullfighters, but an absolute lust for blood, his whole small being aflame with wrath when a bull failed to keep up his character as a *toro bravo* by goring the correct number of horses.

I will not attempt a description of the performance, which was not considered anything special by the critics, but which was marked by more than the ordinary number of incidents. To a novice it was, in turn, exciting and disgusting.

The espadas on this occasion were Freg, Algabeño II and Nacional, and there were six bulls from a famous herd, two to each man. Freg led off with the first bull, which he killed with a graceful dexterity, giving one of his famous *volapiés*. Algabeño followed, dispatching his adversary in a manner that was slow, unemotional, direct, without much play of cloak, and then came Nacional. This man had the bad luck of having allotted to him a beast that did not want to fight, and then the trouble began. The bull refused to gore the blindfold horse, standing there so unknowing of the fate in store for him, the espada failed to excite him, the *banderilleros* danced in vain and a regular tempest of indignation swept through the immense amphitheatre. Cries were heard ordering the bull to be replaced by another. He was a bad bull, he was to go. The question was referred to the authorities, who decided that he was to have another chance. The people abused the bull, the authorities and the unlucky espada. “*Mal toro, fuera!*” they cried.

Close beside me my small neighbour, whose excitement I had noticed before and who was now standing on his seat, his small round face purple with wrath, was shouting with the best: "Mal toro, fuera, fuera!" The little cushions that are let out by the attendants, to mitigate the hardness of the benches, were now flung down into the arena as a protest, and were caught and flung back quickly and with unerring aim by the attendants. Then, all at once, the excitement subsided and the bull was persuaded to act in accordance with schedule. Nacional was more lucky with his second bull, when he retrieved his reputation as a first-rate espada.

If the third bull was not fierce enough, the fourth erred on the other side. He dismounted a picador who was unable to get out of the way, owing to the padding and armour that they wear, piercing his face with his horns and inflicting a wound that afterwards proved fatal. Not content with that savage onslaught, he succeeded in wounding Freg in the leg just as he was giving the *coup de grâce* with all his accustomed daring. The Mexican received an ovation as he was carried off, which I imagine he richly deserved.

Looking back on the mingled emotions of that day, I must say that the bullring is no place for a lover of animals. The daring of the men, the interest of watching their strategy, even though the technique were not really understood, the excitement of the contest, all these count for much, but they cannot compare with the disgust which arises from seeing the banderillas flung at the bull

or the horns of the bull disembowelling a blindfold horse. You may try to shut your eyes to the latter performance, you will find that you are usually just a fraction of time too late. A law has been passed recently, which is generally approved, obliging a covering to be placed over the dead horses while they lie in the arena.

I am told that I shall enjoy my second bullfight as much as any Madrileña, but I am inclined to agree with the late George Street, whose book on Gothic architecture in Spain is so widely known. He says somewhere: "I felt, however, that one bullfight was enough for me."

## CHAPTER XXIX

### A SUBURB OF MADRID

HERE is nothing really out of the way in dealing with San Sebastian as a suburb of Madrid. Although situated near the French frontier and the Pyrenees and in the typical Basque country, it becomes such during the summer months when the capital empties itself and the inhabitants seek rest and recreation by the seashore. It is an exceptionally pretty place with a bay that is well named "la Concha," the shell, a picturesque little town with narrow streets, in some of which carriages are only allowed to drive one way, and a Casino. The Plaza has been utilized as a theatre for the Inquisition, and a bullring, and every window still has a number neatly painted up in order to facilitate the task of the spectator looking for his seat. The hotels here are excellent and have lovely views over the blue waters of the bay, and it must be pleasant enough in summer. But it is not, primarily, of San Sebastian that I want to speak.

I left Madrid with much regret after having passed three months there, and went for a couple of nights to Burgos. Here an introduction from

D. G. Morales to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Burgos procured for me the great advantage of making the acquaintance of Padre Huidóbro, the great authority on art and architecture in all this region. I then went to Bilbao, one of the great commercial ports of Spain, which is also notable as being one of the newer centres of art and literature. I was sorry only to pass two days in this hospitable city, but my time was running out and I was anxious to stay at San Sebastian in order to visit the studio of D. Ignacio Zuloaga, the greatest and most characteristic of the modern Spanish painters.

The road from San Sebastian to Zamora, where Señor Zuloaga lives, is very beautiful. It winds through green valleys lying among high rocky mountains, the summits of which were sometimes covered with little fleecy clouds and sometimes reared their bare, seared tips against an ultramarine sky. The poplars and larches were just beginning to show a pale green, and there was a note of spring in the air. Then the road left the enclosed valleys and came out on the seashore, becoming a Cornice road that might compare favourably with others better known to the majority of travellers. Here were little bays with golden sands, more open than the Concha, in which the long roll of the waves of the Atlantic sounded sleepily. Out to sea, the colours were vivid emerald-green, turquoise-blue and violet; nearer the shore they were less intense, and a long white curl of foam marked where the waves broke.

As the road wound on, in and out, the country

THE VICTIM OF THE FEAST. IGNACIO ZULOAGA





became much wilder, the mountains more rugged and grander in outline. The rare villages had white houses with steep roofs, the peasants were sturdy men wearing the distinctive Basque cap, round and tight-fitting with a little tuft in the middle of the crown, the women rather hard-featured and strongly built. At last a sweep of the road revealed a wide valley, ringed round with mountains. To landward an extension of the sea made a harbour and beyond was a small village straggling uphill, on the summit of which was a tall church. Between the harbour and the open sea was a strip of land on which was a white house, the home of the painter.

The house was built by Señor Zuloaga after a typical Basque design, of cream rough-cast, with the woodwork of window and shutter painted a strong blue. It is so exactly suited to the position and the position itself is so ideal that the whole effect is delightful. I had not long to admire it, however, for the great painter himself came to the door to greet me, and afterwards showed me over the house.

The interior of the house is Byzantine in character, and I remember a fine fireplace in the hall and some polychrome statues and a beautiful little statue of Christ by Mena ; but I was, naturally, more occupied with my host and with some of his own paintings that hung on the walls than with the decoration of his house. In a gallery next the studio, a bare, austere room with undecorated granite walls, were then hung some of his

masterpieces, but I understood him to say that these were to be replaced by the works of El Greco, of which he has a very fine collection, having been one of the first to appreciate the Cretan master. Of the works that hung there I was very much interested in the wonderful "Victim of the Feast," the wounded horse returning from the bullring. It seemed to express all that I had felt about that aspect of the affair, and I ventured to ask if it might be reproduced for this book.

After an all too short time devoted to studying the large sober canvases, every one of which bore the imprint of genius, we inspected the garden, with its oblong pool of water, and the cloisters, then in process of being erected. The heavy rounded columns had, I think, a little colour about the capitals, but it has grown a little vague in my memory now. The chapel impressed me most of all, with its stern simplicity of style, and I was much interested in two wooden statues carved by a local sculptor and painted by Señor Zuloaga.

I brought away with me very pleasant memories of this my last day in Spain. I can see now the pretty garden and the terrace with the water lapping on the sand just below; I can feel the indescribable sensation of peace that pervaded the whole place. And I can visualize the dignified, upright figure of the painter, and can hear the last words that he spoke to me as he stood on the threshold of his house.

"They say," he remarked quietly, "that we are several centuries behind the age here in Spain,

and I believe that we are. Moreover, we shall never pick them up again. Why should we? We do not want to copy any other nation; we want to be ourselves. I am a Spaniard, and I desire to be purely Spanish. Are we three or four centuries behind the times? Then, let us remain so!"

As the train bore me farther and farther from hospitable Spain, I often thought of these words and conjured up in my mind the image of a man standing, like a sentinel, on the threshold of his country, like the granite barrier of the Pyrenees, to keep out any innovations that might endanger the customs and the traditions of his beloved land.

It was my farewell vision of Spain.



## INDEX

**ABATI**, Joaquin, 169.  
 "A.B.C.," 216.  
**Abd-er-Rahman III**, 268.  
**Abrantes**, Palace of the Duke of, 129.  
**Abreviador**, Casa del, 157.  
**Academy**, the, 174.  
**Acosta**, Rodriguez, 145.  
**Acquaviva**, Cardinal, 93.  
**Alarcón**, Pedro de, 209.  
**Alba**, duque de, Carlos Miguel, 127.  
**Alba**, duque de, Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, 127.  
**Alba** (17th), duque de, 95, 127.  
**Alba**, duquesa de (Francisca de Montijo), 128.  
**Alba**, duquesa de, 81, 120, 127.  
**Alba**, duquesa de (Maria Teresa, wife of the third Duke of Berwick), 127.  
**Alba**, the Señoras de, 167, 168.  
**Alba**, palace of the duque de, 126, 127, 128.  
**Albacete**, 139.  
**Alcalá de Henares**, 144, 233, 241-246.  
 Archiepiscopal Palace, 242.  
 Church of Santa Maria, 242.  
 Plaza Mayor, 242.  
 University, 242, 243.  
**Alcalá Galiano**, Álvaro de (Marques de Castel Bravo), 180, 205, 206.  
**Alcalá Galiano**, Señorita Maria Teresa de, 206.  
**Alcántara**, Military Order of, 223.  
**Alcaráz**, Enrique, viii.  
**Alcázar**, the Moorish, 5, 6, 27, 28, 29, 60.  
**Alexander III**, Pope, 223.  
**Alfonso V of Aragon**, 153.  
**Alfonso VI of Castile**, 5, 200, 267.  
**Alfonso X of Castile (the Wise)**, 142, 170.  
**Alfonso V of Leon**, 267.  
**Alfonso XII**, King of Spain, 30, 241.  
**Alfonso XIII**, H.M. the King of Spain, 27, 31, 34, 35, 36, 125, 178, 189, 219.  
**Algabéño II**, 274.  
**Algeciras**, 12.  
**Alhambra**, the, 151.  
**Alicante**, 137.  
**Ali Ibn Yusuf**, 32.  
**Allegory of the Town of Madrid**, 129.  
**Al Mamum**, 267.  
**Almohades**, the, 13, 150, 151.  
**Almonacid de Zurita**, 223.  
**Almoravides**, the, 13, 200.  
**Alpine Club**, 179.  
**Altamira**, Cave drawings, 134.  
**Altamira**, Professor, 194.  
**Alvarez**, Manuel, 85.  
**Amadeo of Savoy**, 207.  
**Amadis de Gaula**, 196.  
**Amicis**, Edmond de, 17.  
**Andalucia**, 272.  
**Andrade**, 145.  
**Anglo-Spanish Society**, 194.  
**Anne of Austria**, Queen, 22, 86.

Antolinez, Martin, 203.  
 Antonio, Julio, 145.  
 Antwerp, 158.  
 Apollo, fountain of, 85, 90.  
 Aragon, 5, 13, 113.  
 Aragon, Catherine of, 242.  
 Aragon, Don Enrique of, 266.  
 Aranda, Conde de, 85, 154.  
 Aranjuez, 94, 114, 238.  
 Arbos, Fernando, 95.  
 Arco, Quinta del duque de, 94.  
 Ardavin, Luis, 164.  
 Arfe, Juan de, 234.  
 Argentina, la, 167.  
 Armería, 42-51.  
 Asturias, 9, 12.  
 Ateneo, the, 189, 190, 193, 195-204.  
 Audiencia, palace of, 129.  
 d'Aulnoy, Comtesse de, 55, 56, 57, 62, 63, 64.  
 Ávila, 138, 161, 250.  
 Ayala, Ramon Perez de, 193.  
 "Azorin," 17, 193.  
 Bagaria, 133.  
 Baltasar Carlos, Prince, 46, 110, 219, 240.  
 Barcelona, 143.  
 Barcelona book, 142.  
 Barcena, Señorita Catalina, 167.  
 Barocchio, A., 219.  
 Baroja, Pio, 193, 196, 199.  
 Basle, Fadrique de, 144.  
 Basque country, 278, 279.  
     peasants, 279.  
 Bayeu, Francisco, 114, 241.  
 Bayeu, Josefa, 114, 120, 241.  
 Bazan, Admiral Alvaro de, 128.  
 Beauvais tapestry, 157.  
 Becerra, Gaspar, 225, 234, 241.  
 Belgians, H.M. the King and  
     H.M. the Queen of the,  
     34, 35, 36, 38, 179.  
 Beltraneja, la, 5.  
 Benavente, 183.  
 Benavente, Jacinto, 165.  
 Benedito, M., 145.  
 Benlliure, José, 23.  
 Bermudez, Pero, 203.  
 Berruguete, Alonso de, 100, 225, 234, 243, 267.  
 Beruete, A. de, 95, 181.  
 Beruete y Moret, late Director  
     of the Prado, viii, 27, 93, 95, 116, 121, 181.  
 Beruete y Moret, Señora Viuda, 162, 181.  
 Berwick, first Duke of, 126.  
 Berwick, second Duke of, 127.  
 Biarritz, 179.  
 Bilbao, 278.  
 Bilbilis, 51.  
 Blake, William, 101.  
 Blanche of Bourbon, wife of  
     Pedro el Cruel, 267.  
 Blanco, Andres Gonzalez, 132, 208.  
 Boabdil El Chico, King of  
     Granada, 50.  
 Boil, Don Felipe, 135.  
 Bologna, Giovanni di, 54.  
 Bombilla, la, 123.  
 Bonafé, Señor, 167.  
 Bonaparte, Napoleon I, Em-  
     peror, 4, 37.  
     Napoleon III, 128.  
     Joseph, King of  
         Spain, 4, 25, 37,  
         121, 129.  
 Bonnat, Leon, 105.  
 Bordeaux, 239.  
 Borrás, Tomás, 133.  
 Bosch, J., 254.  
 Bosch Pablo, 123.  
 Boucher, François, 115, 118.  
 Bourse, the, 84.  
 Braganza, Barbara de, Queen,  
     224, 225.  
 Braganza, Isabel de, Queen, 94.  
 Brocar, Arnald Guillen de,  
     144.  
 Brun, 143.  
 Buen Retiro China Factory,  
     32, 154.  
     Palace, 7, 61,  
         94.  
     Park, 7, 82, 125,  
         175.

Bull Ring, 272.  
 Buonarotti, Michael Angelo, 102, 103, 231.  
 Burgo de Osma, 250.  
 Burgos, 2, 144, 233, 277.  
 Burgos, Cardinal Archbishop of, 278.  
 Burgos Cathedral, 201.  
 Byne, Arthur, 181, 182.  
 Byne, Mrs. (Mildred Stapley), 160, 181, 182, 226, 250.  
 Byron, Lord, 67, 207.

Caballerizas reales, 125, 126.  
 Caballero, Fernan (Cecilia Bohl de Faber), 208, 209.  
 Calatrava, Military Order of, 223.  
 Calderon de la Barca, Pedro, 68, 175, 176.  
 Calderona, Maria, 175.  
 Canalejas, 23, 24, 187, 188.  
 Cano, Alonso, 156, 221, 234, 235.  
 Canovas, A. del Castillo, 87.  
 Cantero, Miguel, 50.  
 Capilla Publica, the, 34-37.  
 Capo de Monte china, 154.  
 Cardena, San Pedro de, 201.  
 Carlier, René, 225.  
 Carlos I (Emperor Charles V), 4, 6, 27, 38, 42, 43, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 62, 92, 107, 112, 172, 220, 226, 239, 240, 249, 250, 251, 252, 256, 267.  
 Carlos II of Spain, 29, 53, 54, 55, 61, 114.  
 Carlos III of Spain, 82, 85, 93, 112, 114, 154, 240.  
 Carlos IV of Spain, 81, 114, 119, 121, 122, 123.  
 Carlos, Infante Don, 252, 256.  
 Carnival, the, 257, 258.  
 Carpio, Bernardo del, 203.  
 Carreño, Juan de Miranda, 28, 156, 220, 221.  
 Casa Calderon, Señorita, 184, 206.  
 Casa Consistorial, the, 55.  
 Casa de Campo, 32, 58, 94.

Casa de Cordero, 16, 20.  
 Casa Valencia, Condesa Viuda, 179, 180.  
 Casino, the, 156.  
 Casita del Principe, 256.  
 Cason de Felipe IV, 85.  
 Castile, 5, 12, 13, 102, 103, 203.  
 Castilla, Dona Costamza de, 135.  
 Castillejo, Professor José de, 193.  
 Castillo, J. del, 164.  
 Catalina, Sor Maria de Este, 227.  
 Catholic Kings, the, 53, 162, 235.  
 Celestina, La, 196.  
 Cellini, Benvenuto, 234, 254.  
 Celtiberi, the, 11, 12.  
 Celtic influence, 136.  
 Cerros de los Santos, the, 139.  
 Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de, 65, 66, 67, 68, 100, 172, 173, 199, 208, 242.  
 statues of, 84, 242.  
 Charlemagne, Emperor, 12.  
 Charles I of England, 92, 93, 127.  
 Charles II of England, 127.  
 Charles, Prince of Wales, 81, 109.  
 Christina of Sweden, Queen, 93.  
 Churchill, Lady Arabella, 126.  
 Churriquera, 156, 221.  
 Cid, the (Ruy Diaz de Bivar), 13, 50, 200-204, 267.  
 Cid, Poem of, 202.  
 Cisneros, Cardinal Ximenes de, 128, 144, 220, 243-246.  
 Ciudad Rodrigo, General, 23.  
 Clavijo, battle of, 223.  
 Clovio, Giulio, 99.  
 Code of Laws, Visigoth, 142.  
 Codex Toledanus, 142.  
 Coello, Alonso Sanchez, 107.  
 Coello, Claudio, 55, 254.  
 Cofradía de la Sagrada Passion, 170.  
 Cofradía de Nuestra Señora de la Soledad, 170.  
 Cofradías, the, 271.

Colonia, Francisco de, 233.  
 Columbus, Christopher, 82.  
 Comisaria Regia de Turismo, 266.  
 Comuneros, rising of, 22.  
 Consejos, Palace of, 129.  
 Corneille, Pierre, 67.  
 Corral (Calle del Sol), 172.  
     (Burguillos), 172.  
     (de la Cruz), 172.  
     (Pacheca), 172, 175.  
     (del Principe), 172.  
     (de la Puente), 172.  
 Correggio, Antonio Allegri, 128.  
 Corrida de Toros, 269-276.  
 Cortés, Hernán, 216.  
     sword of, 50.  
 Coruña, 206.  
 Cossío, M. B., 101, 193, 265, 266.  
 Covarrubias, Alonso de, 233, 242.  
 Crescenti, Giovanni Battista, 130.  
 Crete, 99, 102.  
 Crichton, the Admirable, 165.  
 Cruz, Ramon de, 239.  
 Cubas, Marques de, 218.  
 Cubells, Martinez, 55.  
 Cuenca, 152, 250.  
 Cuerda Seca pottery, 151.  
 Cuesta, library of, 174.  
 Cueva, Juan de, 174.  
 Custodia, the, 234.  
 Daioz, Luis, 86.  
 Dama, La Boba, 167.  
 Dancing, Flamenco, 168.  
 Dancing, Spanish, 167, 168.  
 Dato, Don Eduardo, 184, 185, 186.  
 Dato, Señorita Isabel, 184, 185.  
 Daudet, Alphonse, 211.  
 David, Jacques Louis, 115, 184.  
 Deputies, House of, 84, 185.  
 Dieulafoy, Marcel, 231, 232, 236.  
 Domenech, Rafael, 160, 266.  
 Donoso, José, 55.  
 Dos de Mayo, obelisk, 84.  
 Dulce, Colonel, 37.

Dumas, Alexandre, 259.  
 Dürer, Albert, 254.  
 Echegaray, José, 176.  
 Egas, Enrique de, 233.  
 Egmont, Count, 39.  
 Egypt, 157.  
 Elche, 137.  
 Elche, the Lady of, 137, 138, 140.  
 Embassy, the British, 180.  
 Encina, Juan de, 174.  
 Enrique III of Castile, 5.  
 Enrique IV of Castile, 5.  
 Episodios Nacionales, the, 22, 23, 210.  
 Época, La, 206, 211.  
 Escorial, Monastery of San Lorenzo, 2, 20, 33, 248-258, 237, 269, 292, 294.  
     village of, 256.  
 España Sagrada, 11.  
 Espartero, General, 81.  
 Espinel, Vicente, 67.  
 Espronceda, José, 87.  
 Esquilache mutiny, 22.  
 Eugene, Prince, 126.  
 Eugenie, Empress, 128.  
 Extremadura, 161, 223.  
 Falcata, the, 137.  
 Fancelli, Domenico, 246.  
 Fañez, Alvar, 203.  
 Fanshawe, Lady, 62, 63, 69.  
 Farnese, Queen Isabel, 92.  
 Farington Diary, the, 271.  
 Favaroia, Giovanni Tomaso, 144.  
 Feijóo, Padre Maestro, 207.  
 Felipe II of Spain, 3, 4, 6, 7, 14, 20, 22, 27, 32, 43, 44, 47, 54, 69, 92, 100, 107, 112, 229, 230, 249, 250, 252, 253, 254.  
 Felipe III of Spain, 28, 49, 54, 58.  
 Felipe IV of Spain, 4, 28, 54, 55, 56, 57, 61, 65, 67, 68, 69, 70, 92, 108, 109, 110, 112, 114, 175, 228, 253.

Felipe v of Spain, 29, 93, 114, 126, 156, 157, 270.  
 Fernandez, Martin, tomb of, 135.  
 Fernando i of Castile, El Santo, 47, 50.  
 Fernando iv of Castile, 5.  
 Fernando vi of Spain, 122, 156, 225, 271.  
 Fernando vii of Spain, 94, 156, 219.  
 Fernando i of León, 4.  
 Fernando of Aragon, El Católico, King of Spain, 6, 220.  
 Fernando, Cardinal Infante, 226.  
 Fernando Fé, library of, 17.  
 Fernando, Infante Don, 46.  
 Figueroa, Don Agustin de, 246.  
 Figueroa, Marqués de, 206.  
 Fitzmaurice Kelly, Professor, 196.  
 Flanders, Matthew of, 143.  
 Flaxman, John, R.A., 115.  
 Floridablanca, Conde de, 114.  
 Fonseca, Bishop, 143.  
 Fostat, 151.  
 Fragonard, 115.  
 Francis i of France, 46, 128, 244.  
 Freg, Luis, 273, 274, 275.  
 Fuendetodos, 113.  
 Fuero Juzgo, 142.  
 Gabriel, Infante Don, 256.  
 Gainsborough, Thomas, R.A., 115.  
 Galatea, la, 66.  
 Galdos, Benito Perez, 22, 23, 209, 210.  
 Galicia, 9, 206.  
 Galve, Conde de, 127.  
 Gardens, Botanical, 2, 85, 94.  
     Zoological, 125.  
 Gasperini, 32.  
 Gautier, Théophile, 88, 89, 90, 125, 248.  
 Giacinto, Corrado, 36.  
 Giner de los Rios, F., 190, 191.  
 Giordano, Luca, 223, 230, 252, 253.  
 Giralte, Francisco, 219.  
 Gobelins Tapestry, 157.  
 Godoy, Manuel, 81, 114, 120.  
 Golden Century, the, 3, 19, 59–70, 79, 92, 135, 169.  
 Gomez de Mora, Juan, 54.  
 Goncourts, the, 210.  
 Góngora, Luis de Argote y, 20, 67, 68.  
 González, Bartolomé, 32, 107.  
 González, Conde Fernán, 203.  
 Gonzalo, Eloy, 72.  
 Goten, Jacob Van der, 157, 158.  
 Goudine, Sacha, 105.  
 Goya y Lucientes, Francisco, 31, 79, 81, 93, 96, 97, 98, 100, 112–123, 129, 158, 220, 221, 222, 271.  
 Gradafés, nuns of, 135.  
 Granada, 12, 39, 53, 151, 234.  
 Grant, Madison, 8.  
 Greco, El (Domenico Theotocopoulos), 91, 97, 98, 104, 105, 107, 113, 254, 266, 280.  
 Gredos, Sierra de, 47.  
 Guadarrama, Sierra de, 1, 2, 4, 18, 33, 60, 110, 179, 192, 250, 255, 256, 258.  
 Guas, Juan, 223.  
 Guerrero-Mendoza management, 166.  
 Gumiel, Pedro de, 243.  
 Gutierrez, Francisco, 82.  
 Hæbler, Konrad, 110.  
 Halberdiers, the, 26, 37.  
 Henri iv of France, 110.  
 Herrera, Juan de, 106, 107, 129, 250.  
 Hispanic Society of America, 149.  
 Hispano-Mauresque pottery, 150–154.  
 Historical Studies, Centre of, 191.  
 Home Office, 16, 18, 21, 186.

Hospital, General, 71.  
 Hospital, di San Fernando, 130.  
 House of the Seven Chimneys, the, 81.  
 Howard, His Excellency Sir Esmé, 34, 180.  
 Howard, H.E. the Lady Isabella, 34, 36, 180.  
 Hoyas, Luca de, 22, 86.  
 Hugo, Victor, 88, 207.  
 Huidobro, Padre, 267, 268.  
 Hume, Major Martin, 20.  
 Huntingdon, Archer, 149.  
 Hurus, Johann, 144.  
     Paul, 144.  
 Ibañez, Vicente Blasco, 199, 210, 264.  
 Iberians, the, 10, 136-140.  
 Inclusa, the Hospital, 20.  
 Incunabula, 141.  
 Industrial Art Exhibition, 160.  
 Infantado, collection, 44.  
     duque de, 220.  
 Inquisition, the, 13, 222, 277.  
 Invasion, the French, 94.  
 Ipenarrieta, Doña Antonia, 110.  
 Isabel de Bourbon, Queen, 110.  
 Isabel la Católica, Queen, 5, 6, 24.  
 Isabel II, Queen, 23, 37, 88, 207, 219.  
 Isabel, H.R.H. the Infanta, 180.  
 Isidro, San, beatification of, 54.  
     Romeria, 212-214.  
 James II of Great Britain, 126, 127.  
 Jimena, wife of the Cid, 200, 201.  
 Jimenez, Guillermo, 272.  
 Juan II of Aragon, 153.  
 Juan II of Castile, 5.  
 Juan, Don, of Austria, 50, 57, 227.  
 Juana, La Loca, Queen, 6, 39, 125.  
 Juana, Infanta (Princess of Portugal), 225, 226, 227.  
 Jubara, Felipe, 29.  
 Junta para ampliación de estudios, 139, 191, 192, 193, 226.  
 Kolman, Desiderius, 47.  
     Koloman, 47.  
     Lorenz, 47, 48, 49.  
 Königsmarck, Count, 57.  
 Kromberger, Johann, 144.  
     Paul, 144.  
 Labrador, Casa del, 239.  
 Lace, Central Depot of, 162, 163.  
 Lafond, Paul, 137, 140, 230.  
 La Granja, palace of, 114, 238.  
 La Mancha, plains of, 65.  
 Lampérez, Blanca de, 118.  
 Lara, the six Infantes of, 203, 204.  
 Larra, Mariano de (Figaro), 80, 87, 124, 180.  
 Las Navas, 250.  
 Las Navas de Tolosa, battle of, 47.  
 Leo x, Pope, 41.  
 León, 12, 203, 223.  
 León, Diego de, 37.  
 León, Fray Luis de, 67, 199.  
 León, Ricardo, 199, 202.  
 Leoni, Pompeo, 225, 252.  
 Lepanto, battle of, 28.  
 Lermes, duque de, 66.  
 Levi, Simuel, 266.  
 Liceo, the, 190.  
 Llano, Marquesa de, 157.  
 Louis XIV of France, 114.  
 Louvre, the, 137, 152.  
 Lucan, Countess of (Duchess of Berwick), 126.  
 Lujan, tower of, 128, 172.  
 Luna, Pablo, 164.  
 Lustre, ware, 150.  
 Lyall, J. P. K., 244.

Macho, Victor, viii, 145, 146.  
 Madrid :  
 Calle de Alcalá, 8, 19, 23, 61,  
 80, 81, 116, 156,  
 219, 223, 227.  
 Atócha, 50, 130.  
 Bailén, 25, 130.  
 Barbara de Braganza, Doña, 224.  
 Carmen, 20, 21.  
 Carretas, 24.  
 Embajadores, 20, 71.  
 Felipe IV, 85, 98.  
 Fortún, 148.  
 Francos, 66.  
 Fuenterrabia, 157.  
 Génova, 181, 224.  
 Goya, 66, 187.  
 Huertas, 66.  
 León, 66.  
 Lobo, 172.  
 Magdalena, la, 66.  
 Marqués de Cubas, 81.  
 Mayor, 16, 20, 52, 55,  
 59, 61, 66, 128,  
 129, 172.  
 Monte Esquinza, 182.  
 Nunzio, 221.  
 Prado, 195.  
 Príncipe, 172.  
 Sacramento, 160.  
 Sagasta, 186.  
 San Bernardo, 222.  
 Santa Isabel, 108,  
 157.  
 Serrano, 134, 164, 187.  
 Sol, 84.  
 Toledo, 55, 72.  
 Velázquez, 169.  
 Ventas del Espíritu Santo, 82.  
 Vistillas, las, 130.  
 Viaduct, the, 130.  
 del Duque de Alba,  
 66.  
 del Arenal, 17, 25,  
 221.  
 Carrera de San Fernando,  
 220.  
 San Jerónimo,  
 19, 22, 61, 84.

Madrid :  
 Corredera de San Pablo, 221.  
 Glorieta de San Bernardo, 222.  
 Gran Vía, the, 84.  
 Paseo de Castellana, la, 1, 80,  
 83, 84, 258.  
 Florida, la, 222.  
 Recoletos, 1, 80, 82,  
 141.  
 Prado, 1, 79-90,  
 218.  
 Plaza de Ángel, 189, 195.  
 Armas, 25, 26, 30,  
 42.  
 Cánovas, 84.  
 Cibeles, 71, 82, 218.  
 Colón, 82, 83, 187.  
 Comendadores de Santiago, 222.  
 Cortes, de las, 84,  
 195.  
 Descalzas Reales,  
 21, 225.  
 Herradores, 130.  
 Independencia, 82,  
 186.  
 Isabel II, 25.  
 Mayor, 7, 52-58.  
 Oriente, 25, 30.  
 Provincia, 129.  
 Rastro, 72.  
 San Andrés, 130.  
 Santa Ana, 24.  
 Villa, 128, 160, 172.  
 Puerta de Alcalá, 23, 82,  
 186, 187.  
 Guadalajára,  
 172.  
 del Sol, 6, 15-24,  
 52, 58, 61, 72,  
 79, 88, 116, 128,  
 186.  
 Santa Bárbara,  
 157.  
 Cafés :  
 Botín, Casa de, 130, 131,  
 132.  
 Cándido, Pastelería de,  
 131.  
 Magdalena, 131.  
 Pombo, 132, 133.

## Madrid :

Churches and Convents :

- San Andrés, 220.
- Andrés de los Flamencos, 221.
- de los Portugueses, 221.
- Antonio Abad, 221.
- de la Florida, 121, 222, 239.
- Atocha, Our Lady of, 157, 222.
- Convent of, 85.
- Buen Suceso, 19, 23.
- Calatrava, Church of the nuns of the Order, 223, 224.
- Capilla del Obispo, 218, 220.
- Cathedral, the new, 218.
- Church of Comendadores de Santiago, 222.
- Descalzas Reales, 225, 226, 236.
- Felipe el Real, 20, 58.
- Francisco el Grande, 114, 130, 220, 221.
- Ginés, 221.
- Isidro, chapel of, 220.
- Isidro, church of, 72, 218, 221.
- Jerónimo el Real, 6, 85, 218.
- Lorenzo del Escorial, 94.
- Maria de la Almudena, 5, 22, 218.
- Pedro, 221.
- Pelayo de Avila (chapel), 125.
- Sacramento, 221.
- Sebastian, 221, 222.

## Madrid :

Church of Solitude, Our Lady of, 20.

Tomas, 221.

Victory, Convent of Our Lady of, 19.

Museums :

- Academy of San Fernando, 119, 156.
- Archaeology, 134-141, 147, 229, 243.
- Archives, 145.
- Armeria, 2, 26, 42-51, 94.
- Artillery, 85.
- Modern Picture Gallery, 145.
- National Library, 141-145.
- Prado, 2, 28, 31, 37, 53, 84, 91-97, 98, 99, 116, 123, 156, 158, 159.
- Valencia de Don Juan, 147-155.

Palaces :

- Alba, 126, 127.
- Buen Retiro, 7, 61, 94.
- Real, 5, 25-33, 158.
- Pardo, 110, 239-241.

Theatres :

- Apolo, 17.
- Centro, 167.
- Comico, 165.
- Eslava, 166, 167.
- Espanol, 166, 189.
- Ideal Rosales (Varieties), 167.
- Lara, 167.
- Princesa, 166.
- Real, 25, 165, 186.
- Romea, 165, 167.
- Maeztu, Doña Maria de, 191.
- Mahdi, the, 13.
- Malaga, 151.
- Cathedral of, 235.
- Manises, 151.
- Manzanares, the, 1, 2, 30, 32, 60, 117, 122, 125, 239.
- Margarita de la Cruz, Sor, 228.
- Margarita, Infanta, 108, 109, 226.

Margarita, Queen, portrait of, 32.  
Margarita, Señorita Stella, 167.  
Maria Cristina, H.M. the Queen-Mother, 35.  
Maria, Infanta, afterwards Empress, 81, 109, 226, 227.  
Maria Luisa of Parma, Queen, 32, 114, 123.  
Maria Teresa, Infanta, Queen of France, 29, 114.  
Mariana of Austria, Queen, 28, 53, 55, 56, 109.  
Mariana de la Cruz, Sor, 226.  
Mari Barbola, 109.  
Mariblanca, statue of, 19, 21.  
Marinos, A., 72.  
Market, the Caledonian, 73.  
Marlborough, first Duke of, 126.  
Marquet, Jacques, 21.  
Martial, Marcus Valerius, 51.  
Martinez, Pinazo, 145.  
Mary, Queen of Scots, 127.  
Mary Tudor, Queen of England, 252.  
Master Printers, the, 143.  
May, the Second of, 23, 79.  
Maximilian III, Emperor, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48.  
Mazo, J. B. Martinez del, 28.  
Medina de las Torres, duque de, 70.  
Medinaceli, duquesa de, 179.  
Palace of, 83.  
Mena y Medrano, Pedro de, 225, 229-237, 279.  
Mendoza, Cardinal, 244, 245.  
Doña Aldonza de, 135.  
Menendez Pidál, R., 193.  
Mengs, Raphael, 36, 114, 115, 157.  
Mentidero, the, 20.  
Mercedes, Queen, 30.  
Merry del Val, His Excellency Don A., 194.  
Mesonero Romanes, Ramon de, 58, 88, 190.  
Michel, Robert, 82.  
Milan, 250.  
Ministry of Marine, 120.  
Mondragon, 50.  
Mondrone of Milan, 48.  
Monegro, Juan Bautista, 251.  
Montalvo, Luis de, 68.  
Montanes, Martinez, 50, 110, 234.  
Montepulciano, Cardinal, 92.  
Montpénzier, Duchesse de, 185.  
Morales, Luis de, 221.  
Gustavo, 215, 261, 278.  
Moran, Miss, 159.  
Moratín, Leandro F. de, 20.  
N. F. de, 1.  
Moratilla, sculpture by, 134.  
Moreto, Augustin, 20.  
Moro, Antonio, 107, 112, 225.  
Mudarra the Bastard, 203.  
Mühlberg, battle of, 48.  
Murat, General, 23.  
Murcia, 143.  
Murillo, Bartolomé Esteban, 90, 93, 96, 98, 156.  
Musaglia, Antonio de, 48.  
Tomaso de, 48.  
Mystery Plays, 40, 170, 174.  
Nacional, 274, 275.  
Naharro, Bartolomé de Torres, 169, 174.  
National Gallery, the, London, 128.  
Nebrissensis, Ælius Antonius, 143, 144.  
Sancho Labraxa, 144.  
Negroli, the, of Milan, 48, 49.  
Olivares, Conde duque de, 68, 106, 110, 113, 127.  
Oliver, Señorita Carmencita, 167.  
Oñate Palace, 21.  
Ontañon, Rodrigo Gil de, 233, 243.  
Ontañons, the, 238.  
Ordoñez, Bartolomé, 233, 246.  
Orgaz, burial of the Conde de, 100, 160, 266.  
Oruete, Ricardo de, 226, 234, 235.

Osma, D. Guillermo de, 147, 148, 149, 154, 155.  
 Ossario y Bernard, 15.  
 Osuna, collection of the duque de, 44, 141.  
 Oxford, University of, 149.

Pacheco, Francisco, 106, 233.  
 Juana, 106, 110.

Padilla, Juan de, 259.

Palace Hotel, 84.

Palencia, Ceferino, 183.  
 Señora Isabel de, 183.

Palmaroli, Vicente, 129.

Palmart, Lambert, 143.

Palomares de Duero, Marqués de, 181, 192.  
 Marquesa de, 181.

Palomino, Antonio de Castro, 104.

Pamplona, armour made at, 46.

Panaderia, the, 53, 55, 58.

Pannemacker, Willem, 39.

Pantoja de la Cruz, Juan de, 54, 107, 253.

Parada, Torre de la, 94.

Pardo, palace of (*see* Madrid)

Pardo Bazan, Condesa de, 205-217.  
 Conde de, 206.

Paris, Hôtel de, 19.

Parliament, the, 219.

Parnasillo, the, 189.

Parral, El, convent of, 135, 221.

Paul III, Pope, 92.

Paular, convent of, 221.

Pavia, battle of, 28, 46, 128.

Pedro I, El Cruel, of Castile, 135, 266, 267.

Peffenhauser, Anton, 47.

Pelé, the, 257, 258.

Peréda, José María de, 156, 209.

Pereira, José María de, 221.

Perez Pastor, Cristóbal, 172.

Pertusato, Nicolasio, 109.

Philippe d'Anjou (*see* Felipe v of Spain).

Philippe le Bel of Burgundy, 39.

Philipsburg, siege of, 126.

Piccinini, the, 48.

Pinillos, José Lopez, 166.

Pisano, process in lustre pottery, 152.

Pizarro, sword of, 50.

Plasencia, Bishop of, 35.

Plomberg, Barbara, 240.

Poblet, convent of, 145.

Polyglot Bible, the, 144, 246.

Portugal, Don Sebastian of, 48.  
 Prince of, 227.

Posa, Pedro, 143.

Post Office, the, 21, 82.

Prado, Museum (*see* Madrid).  
 Meadow, 61.  
 Salon del, 79, 85, 88.

Prensa Grafica, the, 216.

Prim, General, 81, 187.

Primo, Antonio, 21.

Principe, Café de, 189.  
 Casita del, 256.

Puente del Arzobispo, pottery, 152.

Puerta de Hierro Club, 179.

Punic Wars, the, 11.

Pyrenees, the, 10, 277, 281.

Quattuor Allemani, the, 144.

Quevedo, Francisco de Villegas, 59, 60, 67, 68.

Quinta del Sordo, the, 122.

Quintero, Serafin and Joaquin Alvarez, 167, 168, 169.

Quiroga, José, 206.

Quixote, Don, 65, 66, 104, 141, 162, 198.

Raimundo, Abbot, 223.

Ramiro II, of Leon, 4.

Ranero, Señorita Josefina de, 184.

Raphael Sanzio d'Urbino, 41, 127.

Rastro, the, 55, 71-78, 182.

Reed, Sir Hercules, 148, 149.

Regnault, Henri, 104.

Rembrandts, the, 112.

Rennert, H. A., 172.  
Repide, Pedro de, 228.  
Residencia, the, for Ladies, 191.  
for Students, 189, 191, 192.  
Retiro, El, Park of, 7, 82, 125, 175.  
Reynolds, Sir Joshua, 115.  
Ribbons, Barcelona, 76, 161.  
Ribera, Jose de, 73, 96, 98, 108, 156, 226, 254.  
Ritz Hotel, the, 84, 179, 205.  
Rivas, duque de, 88, 190.  
Rizi, Francisco, 53, 221.  
Rodolfo, Emperor, 226.  
Rodriguez, Ventura, 21, 85.  
Rojas, Agustin de, 171.  
Roldan, Pedro de, 234.  
Maria de, 234.  
Romanones, Conde de, 246.  
Romney, George, R.A., 115.  
Rubens, Sir Peter Paul, 91, 111, 112, 221.  
Rueda, Ropez de, 169, 172.  
Ruiz, A. Salcedo, 189.  
Isabelita, 107, 189.  
Rusiñol, 145.  
Sabatini, F., 82, 225.  
Sacchetti, Giovanni Battista, 30.  
Saguntum, 151.  
Saint-Georges, Chevalier de, 127.  
Saint-Simon, 126.  
Salamanca, 73, 144, 223, 244.  
Salamantiné work, 161.  
San Bernadino, heights of, 29.  
San Carlos, duquesa de, 36.  
San Ildefonso, Palace of, 94.  
San Martin, library of, 28.  
San Quentin, battle of, 28.  
San Rafael, Condesa de, 162.  
San Sebastian, 179, 277, 278.  
Sanchez Cantón, F., 37.  
Sancho III of Castile, 223.  
Sanders, Horace, 137.  
Sansovino, Francesco, 100.  
Santiago, Military Order of, 223, 238.  
Old Palace of, 238.  
Reliquaries of, 150.  
Sardine, burial of, 250.  
Sarmiento, Augustina, 109.  
Scott, Sir Walter, 207.  
Segovia, 43, 238.  
Sentenach, Narciso, 106.  
Serna, Ramon Gomez de la, 24, 71, 77, 78, 132, 133.  
Serrano, José, 164.  
Sessa, duque de, 173.  
Seville, 106, 143, 144, 152.  
Shakespeare, William, 67.  
Sierra, G. Martinez, 165.  
Siloe, Diego de, 233.  
Sion, Bishop of, 35.  
Smith, Sir Keith, viii.  
Soane Museum, London, the, 148.  
Sobieski Stuarts, the, 127.  
Solalinde, A., 139.  
Solana, Gutierrez, 132, 133.  
Sorolla, 145.  
Southey, Robert, 202.  
Spanish Club, London, the, 194.  
Stirling Maxwell, Sir W., 109, 252.  
Street, George, 276.  
Stuart Fitz-James, family of, 127.  
Stuyck, Levinio, 25, 54.  
Tacca, Pietro, 25, 54.  
Tagus, the, 138, 203, 238.  
Talavera de la Reina silks, 31, 161.  
embroidery, 163.  
Tapestry, the Royal Factories, 114, 241.  
in the Royal Palace, 37-41.  
Tavera, Cardinal, 267.  
Teniers, David, 158.  
Teruel pottery, 151.  
Theatre, the, in Spain, 164-176.  
Everyman, London, 165.  
Royalty, London, 165.

Theotocupoli, Domenico, El Greco (*see* Greco, El).  
 Theotocupoli, Jorge Manuel, 100.  
 Tiepolo, Giovanni Battista, 31, 157.  
 Tintoretto (Jacopo Robusti), 102.  
 Tirso de Molina, 67.  
 Titian (Tiziano Cecelli), 48, 98, 100, 102, 112, 127, 254.  
 Toledo, 1, 2, 4, 12, 100, 102, 104, 138, 152, 233, 245, 250, 259-268.  
 Toledo :  
     Afuera, Hôpital de, 267.  
     Alcántara, Bridge of, 260, 268.  
     Alcázar, the, 260, 267.  
     Bisagra, Puerta de, 267.  
     Calle del Comercio, 262.  
         de Santa Justina, 262.  
     Casa del Greco, 265, 266.  
     Castilla Hotel, 259.  
     Cathedral, the, 260, 261, 264.  
     Paseo de Madrid, 267.  
     Procession on Good Friday, 263-265.  
     San Domingo el Antiguo, Convent of, 99.  
     San Martin, Bridge of, 268.  
     San Servando, Castle of, 268.  
     Sangre, Arch of, 262.  
     Santo Tomé, Church of, 266.  
     Visagra, Puerta de, 267.  
     Wamba, King, walls of, 267.  
     Zocodover, the, 260, 261, 262.  
 Toledo, Archbishop of, 244.  
 Toledo, first Archbishop of, 242.  
 Toledo, Juan Bautista de, 250.  
 Tordisillas, 40.  
 Tormo, Monzo, E., 37, 225, 226.  
 Toros de Guisando, the, 138, 139.  
 Torres, D. M. de, 206.  
 Tortosa, 143.  
 Town Hall (Casa del Ayuntamiento), 129.  
 Trend, J. B., 189.  
 Trezzo, Giacomo, 251.  
 Triana, 151.  
 Trinidad, Convent of, 94.  
 Unamuno, Miguel, 193.  
 Ungut, Meinhard, 144.  
 University of Madrid, the, 222.  
 Valdés, A. Palacio, 210.  
 Valdîglesiás, Marqués de, 206.  
 Valencia, 143, 151, 201.  
 Valencia de Don Juan, Conde de, 44.  
 Valencia de Don Juan, Museum (*see* Madrid).  
 Valera, Juan, 209, 217.  
 Valladolid, 43, 171.  
 Van Dyck, Sir Antonio, 112.  
 Varela, C. A., 220.  
 Vargas, Gutierrez de, 219.  
 Vazquez, G., 145.  
 Vega, Lope Feliz de Vega Carpio, 20, 67, 68, 100, 166, 172, 173, 174.  
 Vega-Inclan, Marqués de, 265.  
 Velarde, Pedro, 86.  
 Velasco, Isabel, 109.  
 Velazquez, Brother Diego, 223.  
 Velazquez, Diego de Silva, 25, 28, 61, 68, 89, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 100, 104, 111, 112, 114, 115, 119, 123, 128, 157, 240.  
 Venice, 152.  
 Vergara, Nicolas de, 246.  
 Vergaz, A., 221.  
 Vermayen, Jan, 39.  
 Victoria Eugenie, H.M. the Queen of Spain, 31, 34, 35, 36, 126, 178, 219.  
 Vigarni, Felipe, 233.  
 Vilches, 243.  
 Villanueva, Diego, 156, 256.  
     Juan, 94.  
 Villaespesa, 164.  
 Villondo, Juan de, 219.  
 Vinuelas, Castillo de, 94.  
 Viruez, Cristóbal de, vi.

Visigoths, the, 11, 12, 261, 266, 267.  
Crowns of Kings, 47.  
Vives, Amadeo, 164.

War Office, the, 81.  
Wedgwood lustre ware, 154.  
Wellington, Arthur, Duke of, 23, 50.  
Whistler, James, 104, 107.  
Williams, Leonard, 150.  
Winckelmann, 115.  
Winterhalter, 128.  
Wolf of Landshut, 49.

York, Cardinal of, 127.

Yuste, 40, 47, 48.  
Yusuf III of Granada, 151.

Zamora, 144, 278.  
Zaragoza, 113, 114, 143, 145, 250.  
Emir of, 200.  
Zarzuela, la, 94.  
Zola, Émile, 210, 211.  
Zorrilla, José de, 88.  
Zubiaurre, Señorita María de, 183.  
Ramon de, Valentin de, viii, 145, 183.  
Zuloaga, Ignacio, viii, 145, 183, 278-281.  
Zurberan, Francisco de, 156.



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